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C. F. Thompson

DEUS HOMO.



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DE U S H O M O:

G O D - M A N.

"HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME SHALL NEVER THIRST."—John vi. 35.

BY

THEOPHILUS PARSONS.

THIRD EDITION.

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R H.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
NOTE	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTORY	1
II. OF THE GOSPELS	27
III. OF THE BIRTH AND NATURE OF OUR LORD . .	52
IV. OF THE SOJOURN OF OUR LORD IN EGYPT . .	72
V. OF OUR LORD'S TEMPTATIONS	85
VI. OF FREEDOM	100
VII. OF PRAYER	121
VIII. OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD	132
IX. OF THE MIRACLES	163
X. OF THE PARABLES	241
XI. OF BAPTISM	334
XII. OF THE SUPPER	347
XIII. OF THE APOSTLES	362
XIV. OF THE SADDUCEES AND PHARISEES	382
XV. OF THE CLOSING SCENES IN THE LIFE OF OUR LORD	396
XVI. OF THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN	402
XVII. OF THE DIVINE HUMAN	418
XVIII. CONCLUSION.	426

NOTE.

N O T E.

A RECENT work has attracted much attention, in which the author endeavors to exhibit the human excellence of Jesus Christ. Its title is "Ecce Homo."

More recently another work has appeared, in which the author asserts the divinity of Jesus Christ. Its title is "Ecce Deus."

My book is not written as a criticism of these books, or an answer to them; or with any controversial purpose whatever. But, believing that in Jesus Christ the Divine is Human and the Human is Divine, that He is God and He is Man, both perfectly, I have given to this book a title which may indicate this belief.

So far as we understand this central truth of all Truth, we may understand the relation of God to man, and of man to God; and the relations of men to each other, because they spring from the relation of all to Him; and the universe — of matter and of spirit — for that is made for man and is in perfect relation to him.

My purpose in this work is to exhibit, as well as I can, my understanding of this central Truth, and some of its consequences. It has been written in the fragments of time left me by engagements which are duties. With a painful sense of its great and manifold deficiencies, I publish it only because I still indulge the hope that it may be not wholly useless.

T. P.

DEUS HOMO.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE Gospels narrate a part of the life of Jesus Christ on earth. They tell us of some of His words as men heard them; and of some of His works as men saw them. Within this literal external there lies a system of spiritual truth, which tells us of His life in the spiritual world, and in the spirit of man. This truth is now revealed in an interpretation of the Bible which rests upon the correspondence between spiritual things and natural things; and I begin my work with some remarks upon this correspondence, and upon the character of the Gospels, and of the New Church to which a new interpretation of the Gospels is given.

A correspondence, or analogy, or resemblance, between things of the mind and things of the body, or between spiritual things and material things, must have been perceived by mankind, in some degree and in some way, not only before they could express and record their thoughts in written words, but before they could have words in which they could think otherwise than as animals think. For this correspondence lies at the foundation of all words referring to affection or thought, and enters into their formation. We have many

words which retain both their primitive, or external meaning, and also their derivative, or internal meaning; or the meaning they had in reference to material things, and also the meaning they acquired in reference to spiritual things. Our word "right" not only meant originally a straight line, but is now used in that sense; although it is also our word to express conformity with moral requirement. And it also expresses an idea which is still more remote, — that of a valid claim to or interest in property or privilege. So "rule," which first meant, and still means, a straight stick which being applied to a line ascertained whether it were straight, then came to mean a proposition or formula for measuring moral, intellectual or physical conformity with the requirement of law; and then it meant the law itself. And the word I have just used, law, affords a somewhat curious illustration. In some of the Teutonic languages it, or its analogue, comes from the word "lay," meaning something "laid down" to be seen, remembered and observed. In German the word is from a root signifying to set down, as something set down for observance; and in Latin and the languages derived thence, it comes probably from a root signifying "to read," and then law is something written that it may be read and obeyed; or possibly from a root signifying to select certain things, or collect them together; and then law means a method of acting, selected and imposed for requirement, if the law be positive, or for prohibition, if it be negative. Wherever we seek for the origin of this term "law," which expresses something purely mental, we must find it in something which begins by expressing a purely bodily act. And again, in describing this, I have just used such another word, "impose," which only meant originally to place one thing on another, as we might put a burden on a man's shoulders. Nor could I write without using such words; for our language is full of them, and rests upon them. So it is in all languages of which I have any knowledge; and the state-

ments of those who have a far wider and more accurate knowledge of languages, both ancient and modern, authorize the belief that it is an universal law.

Philology, or the science of language, has been much studied recently; and the leaders in that science, although they do not use our word "correspondence," agree that all words in all languages, which express ideas that are purely mental or emotional, at first expressed purely sensuous ideas, and came afterwards to express these higher ideas by metaphor founded on the analogy between things of sense and things of thought and affection. And Müller, a leading philologist of this day, reaches a result of much interest to us. By tracing back language to its primitive formation, he comes to the conclusion, that in the earliest ages, the human mind must have possessed an aptitude for and a tendency to the perception of analogies between spirit and matter, since unknown; and that not only language, but mythology, was founded upon them; and he calls this "the age of metaphor." Compare this with Swedenborg's statement, made an hundred years ago, that in those primitive ages, the correspondence between what is of the spirit of man and what is of external nature was a matter of familiar knowledge, and of common perception; and he, too, declares that the old mythologies were founded upon this perception.

Among all races, from the earliest days, Poetry has existed. It has been a mode of expression sought by the purest and best affections and the profoundest thoughts; and it has re-acted upon them to give to both affection and thought, force, distinctness and elevation. The reason is, that poetry is essentially founded upon this correspondence; and because poetry reaches from nature to spirit, and embraces both, it has brought to the heart and to the mind treasures of feeling and of thought, not otherwise attainable.

Poetry may be illustrated by comparing it with Science, using both words in a very wide sense. For by science may

be meant all knowledge of this external universe. Then poetry comes to fill this knowledge with something that is better and higher; something which makes this knowledge instructive about the relation between the forms and instruments of life, and life itself. Or if we wish to give the name of knowledge to this also, then poetry imparts a higher and more interior knowledge, which lies within the lower and outer gifts of science.

In this, however, I speak of poetry in its true character, doing its proper work. At the present day, the common understanding about poetry, justified perhaps by a large part of the poetry we have now, is one of the proofs as well as one of the effects of the lowness of the plane on which human thought now stands and acts. Many love poetry and enjoy it very much, and value it very highly. But even they think it unreal. Even they would not deny that which to most men is a self-evident truism,—that poetry is merely imaginative; and that imagination can do no more than suggest pleasing unrealities; pleasing, and permissible because harmless, so long as it is carefully remembered that what imagination suggests must necessarily be opposed to truth and fact. For “imaginary” is now, by common consent, used as synonymous with unreal, or non-existing and false. Say to any man, “Your reasoning sounds well, and has much force; but I think imagination has something to do with it;” and he would suppose you intended to charge him with error and folly.

Doubtless imagination often deceives. It is certainly the parent of a vast proportion of all existing illusions. But this is only because a good thing, when perverted, becomes a bad thing; and a very good thing becomes a very bad thing. Imagination is one of the faculties which are given to man, that he may learn what beasts cannot learn; that he may prepare himself to become what beasts cannot become and therefore need no faculties to prepare them to become. Im-

agination, when perverted and abused, teaches illusion and untruth, for the very reason that when unperturbed and rightly used, it teaches truths which cannot be learned otherwise. For a faculty which when used in one way teaches certain things, when it is used in an opposite way must teach opposite things.

Reason is a most important faculty; but Imagination is also important. They are intended to work together in perfect harmony. They are indeed indispensable to each other. Imagination without reason is wild, fantastic and unsafe. Reason without imagination is barren, and lies crippled and grovelling on the ground. Nor let it be asked which is the greater of the two. Only when they are separated, only when they refuse that cordial co-operation without which neither can do its own work well, can the question be asked. When thus separated, Rationalism teaches infidelity, and Imagination suggests only falsehood; and it is an idle question, which of these two should have precedence.

There are tests by which we may know whether imagination is teaching truth or falsehood. One is that already indicated, the confirmation of its lessons by reason. All human faculties, when healthy and rightfully used, act in harmony; but they also act together in what has the semblance of harmony, when both are unsound and wrong, and both are wrong in the same way. Hence, if the imagination is depraved, the reason may be equally depraved; and then their harmony is an agreement in falsehood. Therefore there is need of a further test; and that is, the consonance of that which imagination suggests and reason confirms, with the Word of God. This Word is uttered to man, or this Wisdom is revealed to man, because our Father knows the necessary and eternal liability to error which belongs to human freedom, (as will be stated more fully in subsequent pages,) and gives in the Bible His own wisdom, His own absolute truth, to man, in such a form that it may be — still preserving human freedom — an

eternal and sufficient protection against error, if that protection is desired because that error is hated.*

* In giving this place and this value to Imagination, I may bring from some minds, — who will not care to notice what I say of Reason and its relation to Imagination, — the objection that I admit the system of New Church Truth to be founded in a good degree upon imagination, and therefore admit it to be unreal and false. But I am encouraged to say what I think about this faculty by the growing appreciation of its value. Years ago, Brewster, in his life of Newton, spoke of Imagination as indispensable to the highest work of the mathematician. In a lecture recently published by Tyndal, who, I suppose, knows more about light and heat than any other scientist, he says, "It is thought by some, that natural science has a deadening influence on the imagination, and a doubt might be fairly raised as to the value of any study which would have necessarily this effect. . . . This, in fact, is the faculty which enables us to transcend the boundaries of sense, and connect the phenomena of our visible world with those of an invisible one. Without imagination we never could have arisen to the conceptions which have occupied us here to-day." Both Brewster and Tyndal, and others who are now saying such things (Agassiz calls imagination "the keenest detective of truth"), use the word imagination, and recognize the faculty, in its lower use. They refer to it as that by which we may rise from the knowledge of facts and things learned by sensuous perception, to the knowledge of material facts and things and laws which are beyond the apprehension of sense. I mean this too. But I also mean that by this faculty, always in conjunction with Reason and with Faith, we may continue our ascent, and rise to the knowledge of the spiritual and causative things and forces and laws which in this Universe of God ultimate themselves in these externals. When such a man as Tyndal knows this, he may repeat the words he uses now, but with a higher meaning. He may say, as he says in this lecture, "The outward facts of nature are insufficient to satisfy the mind. We cannot be content with knowing that the heat and light of the sun warm and illuminate the world. We are led irresistibly to inquire, what is light? and what is heat? And this question leads us at once out of the region of sense into that of imagination. Thus pondering, and asking, and striving to supplement that which is seen and felt, but which is incomplete, by something which is unseen and unfelt, but is necessary to its completeness, men of genius have in part discerned, not only the nature of light and heat, but also through them, the general relationship of natural phenomena. Nature is not an aggregate of independent parts, but an organic whole. If you open a piano and sing into it, a certain string will respond. Change the pitch of your voice; the first string ceases to vibrate, but another replies. Change again the pitch; the first two strings are silent, while another responds. Now, in altering the pitch, you simply change the form of the motion communicated by your vocal chords to the air, one string responding to one

Poetry, genuine poetry, rational poetry, using the Imagination, sees in the facts which sense perceives, or in the structures which sensuous thought builds up, other facts of a far higher class ; intellectual, moral, affectional, or spiritual facts : it is as sure of these, as sense is of its lower facts ; and it knows how to present them invested with all the charm and attractiveness that belong to them. Not, however, with the force and definitiveness and fruitfulness which also belong to them. For this completed result, Poetry and Reason must, and if neither is perverted, can, co-operate.

Poetry is, I repeat, as sure of these higher facts as sense of its lower facts ; and it may well be so ; for these lower facts are but the forms, the clothing, the effects, in which the higher live, and by which they are or may be indicated.

No wonder that from the beginning Poetry has been the willing handmaid of Religion. Take our own Bible ; what is more common than to hear its poetry praised in terms of the most emphatic commendation. But this praise is usually given as if it implied — sometimes *because* it implies — a denial of peculiar sanctity, and even of truth. As if when the Psalms or Songs or Prophecies are called exquisite poems, this is to assert that they can have no higher inspiration than belongs to all the best poetry. This is just as reasonable as it is to say, as is now sometimes said, that the Bible is a book, and therefore not the Word of God. It is a poem, and it is a book ; but it is not such a poem, or such a book, as others are.

form, and another to another. And thus is sentient man sung unto by nature, while the optic, the auditory, and other nerves of the human body are so many strings, differently tuned, and responsive to different forms of the universal power."

If they who read these words have any knowledge of Swedenborg's philosophy, they will be struck with the accordance between these latest words of accepted science, and those views of the organs and faculties of sense, — of what and how and why the eye sees, for example, — announced by Swedenborg more than a century ago.

Always has Poetry exercised a function of vast importance. The best poetry of our own times does this now, and never was this function more needed than it is now. This function is, to suggest, to teach, to keep alive, truths which reason, in its divorce from imagination and its contempt for imagination, is reluctant to learn, or unable to comprehend or appreciate. The best poetry, — that which through all changes of fashion or debasement of taste preserves some hold upon the common thought, — reveals the symbolism of nature, and makes all its beauty, its splendor and its exuberance of blessing, significant, and suggests relations of the visible to the invisible, and lifts up the mind into regions where the fetters of time and space fall away. But all this is permitted by reason in its present state, only on condition that it be taken for “poetry ;” that is, “fiction.” Let the same things be said with simple directness, and presented in a scientific form for rational acceptance, and they would be at once rejected and despised. It is only because poetry lets this mistaken reason alone, and permits it to reject all definite belief, that these thoughts are allowed to enter as at a side door, and reach the affections if they can, and remain in the mind as imaginations, ready to accept the name of fantasies whenever reason thinks them worth naming. What the logical reason would not do at all, that poetry could do, and has done ; very imperfectly however, because of its separation from reason. But however poor in comparison with what might be, it is also of vast and immeasurable value, if it prevents the desolation and death to which that mind condemns itself, which refuses to listen to anything, to see anything, to believe anything, beyond or above nature.

The increasing tendency to recognize this symbolism of nature cannot but be perceived by observing and thoughtful persons, and to some of them it seems to be full of danger. Gladstone, the great English statesman and orator, in a recent address at Manchester which attracted much attention,

expressed his delight at the habit of the workingmen of that city, of leaving the places of drinking and other gross pleasures, and spending their holidays in brief excursions into the surrounding country, to enjoy the beauty of nature; and of that beauty and its significance he spoke most eloquently. An able English critic of this speech says, among other things, "In other ages men worshipped idols of their own making; there seems now to be a growing danger that they will worship the symbolism of nature." And this would be most dangerous, if their worship stopped at nature; but it is not dangerous, — it is anything but dangerous, — if through this symbolism they learn to worship Him whose constant Presence creates nature, and is its cause, its life and soul.

Among the early Christians there were earnest and direct efforts to bring this symbolism of nature to bear upon the interpretation of the Bible. A large proportion of the most eminent of the Fathers endeavored to find in this way the spiritual meaning of Scripture. I may say more of these efforts elsewhere; now, only that they gradually ceased, and would be generally and justly condemned as without authority or reasonableness. Quite frequently, however, the "orientalisms" and the figurative style of the Bible are now spoken of; and some portion of this symbolism every one admits. Probably no one who had any reverence for the Bible, ever doubted that Egypt, Canaan, the wanderings in the wilderness, and the like, have some spiritual meaning. And there are many texts, universally admitted for their symbolic meaning, which can have no other.

And now, What has the New Church to say to this? It proposes to gather these fragments into a whole; to give systematic order and connection to the scattered and severed parts. It declares that what has been only permitted, and that upon humiliating terms, is a positive truth, which is the foundation of a most real science; and that this science has

the power of illustrating all truth, by making the world of sense the transparent covering of a world that neither the senses nor sensuous thought can discover. It declares that faculties of the human mind, which have been separated and have pined and sickened in this separation, may now come together; and that no man shall put them asunder. That Reason shall put forth a higher power than any it has been conscious of, and do a nobler work than any it has contemplated. While Imagination, which Divine mercy has never permitted to be wholly suppressed or extirpated, and which while dimly recognized has always been active, can now co-operate with Reason in bestowing upon the thoughtful mind treasures of knowledge, and upon the religious heart motives, affections, hopes and faith, which have heretofore been seen only as glimpses into heaven through broken and tempestuous clouds.

It accepts and accounts for efforts of the human mind in all past ages, which were never more than momentarily successful, but could never be suppressed. It exhibits that as a fact, which has always been felt to be one, and never seen to be one. It gives positive reality, scientific precision and completeness, and a foundation not to be shaken, to the symbolism of nature; and by it, and the use to be made of it, brings into harmonious co-operation and mutual respect, Reason and Imagination, Science and Poetry. It not only declares that this symbolism exists, but whence and how it exists, or the cause and method of it; and why it exists, or the purpose for which it is, and the good it may do. And it reveals the harmony between the works and the Word of God, makes each of these explanatory of the other, and brings them both to the mind of man, as joint teachers of infinite, living, ever-growing, ever-ascending Truth.

I have said the New Church does this, gives this. But, to the present age? to you, or to me? Certainly not in anything like completeness of disclosure, or perfect clearness of

vision. For that, mankind must wait as the ages roll by. The Science of Correspondence could not be the great thing that it is, were that possible at once. But what is now given is, first, the assurance of a great truth; and then such reasons, principles and illustrations as justify and explain this assurance. Compared with what has been, how much. With what will be, how little.

Swedenborg is an authority for the fact that there is such a science. And to him and his disclosures we look in the first place for the principles of the Science of Correspondence, and the method of its application to the Word and the works of God. He has given us the fact that there is such a science, and its ground and principles; and with this he gives illustrations of their application and the fruits they bear, quite enough for the implantation of this science in human thought, as a permanent and most important instrument for the advancement of our race in knowledge and wisdom.

There is, however, nothing in the history of mankind to justify the hope of an early or an easy reception of the science, as a science. An eminent historian of the progress of knowledge, has, in his account of every great discovery, first, a chapter concerning the preparatory and introductory epoch, then one relating to the discovery itself, and then one describing the gradual and slow recognition and use of the discovery. No *truth* can be received by those who are not ready for it. And it has always been the case, that every great truth, which was to work an extensive and important change in the intellectual condition of mankind, for that very reason comes into conflict with those modes of belief and opinion which it will reform, and therefore finds a general unreadiness for its reception; and this can give way only gradually. This has always been more true of the more important truths, and most true of the most important; and if the same proportion holds, it will be more true of this Truth than of any other scientific truth ever made known.

But another thing which has always been seen, may be seen now ; and* that is, *some* preparation for any impending discovery. I think this may now be seen in some advance even in what is called science, towards the recognition of some positive relations between the visible and the invisible world. If such views as are distinctly expressed in Oersted's "Soul in Nature"* prevail in any mind (and the book does not stand quite alone), they must prepare that mind to receive the Science of Correspondence. I think the very general and indefinite, but quite common effort to find the affinities, or homologies, or analogies, which connect all things, has a decided tendency in the same direction.

It is in this connection, that I welcome what to many religious persons seems a most alarming characteristic of the times. I refer to the violent, the persistent, and the seemingly successful assaults of a science for the most part purely naturalistic, against the Bible. It cannot now be denied that some of the best established certainties of science enter into conflict with the literal sense of the Word. Of late this antagonism has been developed in all directions. It must be considered as proved, that many statements in Genesis and Exodus, and in the subsequent history of the Jews, cannot be literally true. And the extreme difficulty attending any theory of Inspiration which has ever hitherto been offered, weighs oppressively upon religious and thoughtful minds.

These assaults are made from various motives, some of which I suppose to be very bad ; but I have no fear of their ultimate effect. The religious sentiment of mankind cannot perish, for the plain reason that mankind are not — certainly not yet — to perish. And this religious sentiment will in all ages demand, and will in all ages find, its support and nutri-

* "Geist im Natur" is the title in the original German. I have never seen the book except in the translation published in Bohn's Library. Its publication in that collection is some evidence of its — at least expected — popularity. I may recur to this book again.

ment in the Bible; in that revealed Word of God which was revealed for this very purpose. It is interesting and pleasant to me to observe — more in England than on the continent of Europe, and more there than here, but in some sort everywhere — evidence of a growing willingness and a growing endeavor to find in the spiritual sense of Scripture, not a substitute for, but the support of and the soul of its natural sense.

The Bible has been, until our days, providentially preserved from these assaults, partly by the profound although dim reverence felt for it, and partly by the inadequacy of the weapons and the strength of science to make these assaults successful. But now they are strong and permitted, because a sure and perfect defence against their utmost violence is within the reach of mankind.

I will not here anticipate the consideration of a topic to be presented in other places, namely, the constant presence of freedom as one of the constituent elements of human nature, and the necessity of free and voluntary self-determination for all permanent improvement. I will say, however, that upon this principle depends the fact, that whenever new moral or religious truth is presented to men, it can only be so presented for any useful purpose, as to render its acceptance by choice and in freedom, possible: more than this cannot be. The coercion of men into constant good conduct by an ever-present terror, would not satisfy the Divine desire of making men happy; nor would it, to coerce them into intellectual reception of truth by such an exhibition or such a proof of it, as should force assent. Always, and by a universal and irresistible necessity, religious truth is given in conformity with this law. The very miracles of our Lord, which led to His feet those who were willing to see in Him the presence of His Father, only persuaded those who did not love the truth, that He was the agent of Beelzebub.

This law, because it is universal, is applicable everywhere.

The giving of every religious dispensation is delayed, until there be so much readiness for it, as will render a reception of it in freedom possible; nor is it or can it be pressed upon any nation, or age, or individual, beyond this measure.

Take, for example, this correspondence between spiritual things and natural things. It has been altogether withheld in perhaps no age and from no race. As far as men were willing to use it, in language, in poetry, on the outskirts of science, or anywhere, or in any way, they could do so. But now the Truth, the Fact, the Science of Correspondence, is given, as a great reality. We may be sure that it was not given, unless there existed a certain readiness to receive it; and we may be sure that it is given only to meet that readiness.

Let me say, that while I certainly could not, I certainly would not if I could, present this subject with such a charm of eloquence, or such overmastering logic, as should make every reader, whether willing or no, lay hold of it as a great and certain discovery. I certainly would not, if I could, so present it as to wrench open a reluctant understanding, and gain a momentary admittance for that truth which, when the mind returned to its freedom, would assuredly be cast forth, and the darkness be all the blacker for the light which had flashed upon it.

Far less than this is my purpose; far less. I desire only so to present this science, and some of the truths and principles which compose it, and so to illustrate them by their bearing on the Gospels of Christ, as *not* to compel their reception by a negative mind, or by one to which the sufficiency of sensuous thought and mere naturalism leaves no desire for anything more; but, to assist an affirmative mind, or one already opened by a belief that this life is given to prepare for and be followed by a never-ending life, and that there is a God in whose universe there is something higher than nature,—to assist such a mind to see so much of this new gift to man, as to desire to see more.

WHY THIS CORRESPONDENCE EXISTS.

The New Church not only declares the fact of a correspondence between spiritual things and natural things, but explains and accounts for this fact.

The fundamental truth upon which this explanation rests, is, that God, the Creator, creates the universe, *not* from *nothing*, but from HIMSELF. From Himself go forth what, if we please, we may call spheres; although we can have no adequate idea of them, and our language gives us no precise expressions for even the ideas we have. But what flows from Him is finited by ceasing to be Himself. That sphere which is first from Him, and nearest to Him, becomes an instrument in which is His divine creative power, and by which a farther and more external sphere, or manner of being, is caused. This, in its turn, becomes a similar instrument; and His power acts in and by that sphere to produce or create another and farther form of existence. Every sphere which is nearer to Him is farther from us and from our possibility of adequate conception; and every lower sphere comes nearer to us and more within our reach. So creation goes on,—not at the beginning only, and then for all time,—but in all time, continuously, incessantly, and as an always present and always causative activity, until the lowest sphere of all, the material universe—the Last Finite—is formed; and between this and the First Finite are all possible modes of existence.

But the Last Finite itself, the dead things of earth, are not wholly within our reach. That they are not all within the reach of the senses, the telescope and the microscope alone would prove; for whatever either may tell which we could not otherwise know, its farthest disclosures indicate a world beyond them. Nor are they any more within the reach of our understanding; for within the nature and forces and laws of material things lie inscrutable mysteries. There may be

no definite limits to the possible progress of science ; but beyond this again will ever be something more ; for even the material world has the infinite within. That infinite is One, but it is a One composed of distinct, although united elements of being ; and these are gathered and ultimated in the last finite, which comprehends the whole external universe.

In what manner the creative force within each sphere of being uses that sphere to create a lower until we reach the lowest, we can understand, if at all, most imperfectly. But something about it we may understand. We may at least know *that*, if we cannot know *how*, the soul creates the body. In the mother's *ovum*, when that is impregnated by the father, is the life of the man who is to be born. It is there, containing, in first principles, all the life of the father and mother, and of all their ancestors. It is there, but only *potentially* ; and in our day science now recognizes the potential existence of force, and thereby possesses a great truth, and a powerful instrument for the acquisition of truth. Life, — the individualized and personal life of the man that is to be, — is in the impregnated *ovum* potentially. And this life, gathering together from earthly materials all that it needs for clothing and ultimation, forms a body, and fills it as it forms it, and causes its growth to maturity. And a correspondence — imperfect from the interruption of many obstacles — exists between the soul and the body.

The soul does not create ; it only finds and uses what it thus gathers and forms and animates. The vital and creative force within any sphere may be regarded as operative, first, within the sphere itself, where it is all the life that is there. Then, as going onward to create ; or, as descending into a farther and lower creation, and there existing and operating. It is the active principle in all the members and individualities of each sphere, and in all their activities ; as in the life of men and animals, and in what we call the life — using the word with a lower meaning — of vegetables ; and

in all the forces and workings of material elements. But it also passes beyond every sphere (except the lowest), and creates the method of being below its own; and in this way the whole spiritual world is the instrument by which the whole material world is brought into being, as the soul is the instrument by which the body is brought into being. It causes the things of a higher sphere to find and gather among the things of a lower sphere, what the higher things need, that they may be and live as individualities among these lower things. And it is in this way, or by this method, that the soul forms the body. Even as I write these words, I feel how nearly useless it must be to suggest such things, and leave them wholly unexplained. If the character and scope of my work prevent such explanation as I might hope to make by a full consideration of these topics, why even suggest them? I feel this, and yet offer these suggestions to those who may think them worth any consideration.

The main point is, that a relation and a correspondence exists between all that is spiritual and all that is material; and that all that is material is caused or formed by what is spiritual, and represents it, and when interpreted by the laws of that correspondence, indicates its cause.

OF THE WORD.

One of the purposes of Providence in so constituting and correlating the things He causes to be, is, that the world outside of man may instruct him concerning the world within; that things subject to time and space may tell him of things which time and space do not hold in bondage; that this beginning of being may be preparatory for that state or mode of being to which it is introductory. And because both of these worlds, the spiritual and the material, consist of an indefinite amount of things and forces operating among them,

— the things and the forces of the one corresponding to the things and the forces of the other, — the amount of the instruction thus given has no limit, and there will be none to the knowledge thus, step by step, to be acquired.

It has, however, pleased our Father to offer to His children yet other aid ; to come to their minds by a yet other instrument. His wisdom, in itself wholly inconceivable, finites and limits itself in the human understanding, that it may there be the man's own understanding. It also finites and limits itself in a written Word, perfectly accommodated to the human understanding. It has done this by means of Inspiration and of Correspondence.

· Inspiration cannot be understood, excepting as life is understood. Man lives because he has within his material body a spiritual body with organs and members and all other things which compose a living body, even to the minutest fibres or cells. This spiritual body lives ; and it imparts life to the material body ; for all the organs and all the parts, great or small, of the spiritual body, are clothed upon by the similar organs and parts of the material body. It is always the spiritual eye which sees ; or, more accurately, it is always through his spiritual eye that the man sees. But he sees also through the material eye, which clothes the spiritual eye. So when he puts a glass lens to his material eye, he sees through the lens also. The lens does not see, but the eye behind it sees through the lens and by means of it ; and the material eye does not see, but the spiritual eye within it sees. The lens enables the eye to see things it could not see without it ; and it prevents the eye from seeing things not properly placed and suited to the lens. So the material eye enables the spiritual eye within to see material things and bodies which it could not see without the material eye ; and it prevents the spiritual eye from seeing spiritual things, because they are not suited or adapted to the material organ. At death all this changes. The spiritual body rises from the

material body; and therefore the material body lives no longer. And the spiritual eye loses its material organ or instrument, and loses the power of seeing material things. But it then possesses the power of seeing spiritual things; for it was always an instrument perfectly adapted to the faculty of sight possessed by the soul or the man, just as the material eye is an instrument adapted to the spiritual eye while the man lives in a material body and in this material world. Without the material eye, which is withdrawn by death, spirits no more see us who are still here than we see them. We have our own material world, and our material eyes through which we may see that material world. They have their own spiritual world, formed of the same spiritual substance of which their spiritual bodies and all its organs are formed; and their spiritual world is therefore precisely adapted to their spiritual organs, as our material world is adapted to our material organs.

But even while we live here, it is possible, if so Divine Providence wills, that the material organs cease for a time to be an obstruction to the sight of spiritual things. Then we see — or we may hear or feel — what we should see or hear or feel if we had left the body. This change may take place with one organ and not another. If it be the eye, we see spirits and spiritual things. If it be the ear, we hear spiritual voices, or music, or other sounds. Or it may be both these organs, or all the organs.

It was in this way, or by this change, that men saw angels in the instances recorded in Scripture, and that they see spirits or spiritual things whenever that takes place.

But if all human life is essentially spiritual, — material life being only the clothing and instrument of spiritual life, or of the soul's life, — the question then comes, But what is this spiritual life, this life of the soul? whence does it come? what is it in its origin?

To answer this question, we begin with saying, that there

are two fundamental facts of human life, whether in heaven or on the earth. Of these, the first is, that our life is God's life, given to us, and received by us. The second is, that the Divine life is so given to us, that it does, in point of fact, and most actually, become our own life.

From the first of these facts we may learn, that the Divine life, consisting of love and wisdom, flows as love into the human will (which is created a form or vessel recipient of love), and there becomes the man's own, and is whatever love, desire, affection, or impulse, good or bad or mingled, it must become or be made to be, by being his own. So it flows as wisdom into his understanding (which is created a form receptive of wisdom), and there becomes his own, and so becomes whatever of thought, opinion, belief, or imagination, true or false or mingled, it must become by being his own. This is human life, — human will and human understanding, — and the man thus living is free to do or to say or to be whatever he chooses to do or say or be.

Inspiration comes when this Divine wisdom flows into the understanding of the man, but does not become his own. The influent wisdom, then, so far as its purposes require, uses the senses, the mind, the memory, the thoughts and habits of thinking, the beliefs and the imaginations of the man, as well as his hands and fingers; but uses them all to effect its own purposes. Because all lower and sensuous knowledges, thoughts, and images correspond to those which are higher, the influent wisdom uses whatever it finds in the man's mind, to express higher and spiritual truths; to express them by means of the knowledges and facts, the thoughts and images, to which these higher and spiritual truths correspond.

Let me take this opportunity to illustrate what I consider the character and function of Swedenborg, not by comparison, but by contrast with that of the inspired writers of the Word. He would have disclaimed nothing more earnestly than his own inspiration. I regard him as a man of remarkable

ability, and great and varied culture ; taught, as no other man ever was taught, truths which no other man ever learned ; and he was thus instructed that he might introduce among men a new system of truth or doctrine, excelling in character and exceeding in value any system of truth ever before known ; a new gift demanding, as the instrument by which it could be communicated, a man possessing not only extraordinary capacity and cultivation, but in both capacity and cultivation definitely adapted to the peculiar work he had to do. But this work was, to learn the truth himself, and teach it to others, *in his own freedom* ; therefore, in his own liability to error, and with the limitations of his own intellect : for, however well suited he was to his work, it was his own work ; and his books are only human books, infinitely far from that Word of God which was written by Inspiration.

Because the correspondence between the things of this lower plane and the things of the higher plane is, in itself, perfect, however imperfect it may be in our apprehension of it, Divine wisdom is able to give to this outermost and ultimate expression of itself, — to this letter of Scripture, this Divine Word which may be read or heard by man, — certain qualities.

Of these, the first is, that this literal Word is a body, a definite expression, of Divine Wisdom, and an adequate instrument of Divine Love.

The second is, that this Wisdom, by means of this instrument, comes down to man in all conditions, as command, reproof, or instruction, and gives to him precisely what he needs in that condition for his improvement and his happiness.

The third is, that while the Divine truth is thus embodied in all its own infinity in a truth apprehensible by man, this truth is precisely that which, being obeyed in its lowest form if it be a command, or learned and made fertile by meditation if it be instruction, will gradually lift up the mind to a

perception of the higher truths which lie within; and will lift up the affections to a love of them.

Let me illustrate this statement by a simple example. I will take "Thou shalt not steal." This is first addressed as positive prohibition to the man who loves to steal, and would steal if not prohibited by a power he feared. It cannot find man in a lower condition. But, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and if the man obeys this law because it is the law of God, he cannot but gradually acquire some perception that this command forbids all dishonesty, and requires all honesty. A regard to the law in this sense will open and elevate his mind still farther. He will see more and more clearly what honesty is, and what honesty requires. He will begin to see that it covers all possible relations between man and man. And earnest endeavors to apply this knowledge to life will lead him to look yet higher; he will see that the requirements of honesty apply also to the relations between man and God. Then, it will be the effort of his mind to see, and of his life to do and be, what honesty requires in all these relations. He will try to give unto God all that is His; "to give unto Him the glory," or to acknowledge that all the good and all the wisdom that he finds in himself come from God. He will seek to discriminate between what is good and what is evil, what is true and what is false, in his own mind and his own life. And as he renders unto God the fullest acknowledgment that all this good and truth are His gifts, he will feel it as a duty, that all the good and the true thus laid as sacrifices upon His altar be without spot or blemish. And earnest persistence in this effort will bear him onward to the next step,—the last. That which was a duty will be a delight; for he will love it, and find his highest happiness in recognizing in all that is good in his own life, the gift, the inflowing, the presence, of Goodness itself. He will begin to taste the highest happiness of heaven.

This very plain command I have selected as an example for illustration, because of its plainness and simplicity. But similar things may be said of every part of the Word.

The fourth quality thus given to the literal sense of the Word is this. It comes down to man in his lowest condition, and in every possible condition. It is a portraiture of God; and the truth it teaches has been well compared to the eye of a portrait, which follows one who looks at it wherever he goes, and, if the room be full, looks so directly upon each man there, that it almost seems to look on him alone. It does see, it does find, it does look directly at every man in this crowded world; for this truth is infinite and all-embracing. Doctrines are such general and universal truths as are true always and for all, and such as all men need to know, and such as are therefore given in forms apprehensible by all. They are therefore given in the literal sense of the Word; and all the doctrines of the New Church rest upon this literal sense. But, if the illustration of one commandment, just above attempted, was intelligible, it may be believed that the spiritual sense may give continuous and unending enlargement and elevation of meaning and of scope to all true doctrine, and confirmation and illustration from all the regions of thought and of knowledge.

A fifth quality was given to the literal sense of the Word wherever that was possible; and that is literal truth: but this was not always possible; and the literal sense is only for the most part, but not in all its parts, literally true. Persons were selected as the subjects of inspiration, whose minds could supply the facts or thoughts and images which were needed. Where these were historical, they were used as they lay in the memory of the writers, if they were adapted to the use for which they were employed. Sometimes they were not in conformity with the actual external facts. Thus Swedenborg tells us that the first chapters of Genesis, as far as to the mention of the immediate ancestors of Abraham,

were taken from an earlier Word, which was written by correspondences, but was not true as a narrative of facts. Hence these chapters do not contain a history of the creation of the material world. But under this form they contain a history of the creation of a spiritual world; a creation which belongs to the present as well as to the past. These chapters also describe the spiritual condition of mankind in early ages; their primitive innocence and subsequent corruption; the churches which in succession lived and died; and they also describe affections and thoughts, beliefs and principles, motives and mental conditions, which exist to-day, and will exist while man exists. So, too, in the subsequent history, such statements as that the sun stood still in Gibeon, and the moon in Ajalon, have no literal truth; and the same thing may be said of the numbers of the children of Israel, and of many facts against which science is now in arms. But when all is said that ever can be said in this way, the literal sense of those passages from which doctrines may be drawn, and the spiritual sense of the whole, remain unaffected.

One of the difficulties with those who consider the question of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, is, that if this be admitted as to the original composition, how can it be as to the copies which differ so much from each other, and as to the translations which are often so inadequate, and sometimes so uncertain.

Let us not forget the marvellous accuracy — so it seems to me — with which the originals of the Old Testament have been preserved. The veneration of the Jews for their Scriptures, and the enthusiastic care and patient labor to secure minute accuracy in the copying of every word and every letter, are well known. The effect is, that there are no various readings of the Old Testament which affect its meaning sensibly. The Greek Septuagint differs often, and sometimes materially, from the Hebrew; and the translations into other languages are not unfrequently of doubtful accuracy.

As to the New Testament, the text has not been so carefully preserved. The different readings are numbered by thousands. But most of them are exceedingly minute and insignificant; and it is, I think, an extraordinary fact, that so very few have any important bearing on the meaning. It should perhaps be mentioned here, that Swedenborg includes as strictly within the New Testament, only the Gospels and the Apocalypse; because the epistles, although most valuable for instruction, were not written by inspiration, or with a continuous correspondence.

The more general answer to the difficulty I suppose to be this. Just as Inspiration itself used all it could find in its subjects, and submitted to the necessity of saying some things "for the hardness of their hearts," and many things without a true literal foundation, — because always and in the whole working of Providence human freedom is respected as far as possible, — so, for the same reason, the Word has been delivered to men, and effectually protected only from those falsifications of its letter which would materially distort the representation; but from these it has been protected.

In subsequent pages I shall have much to say, and to repeat in various connections, of the law which infinite love imposes on itself; — the law that the freedom of man must be preserved, that the purposes of God may be accomplished.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE GOSPELS.

THE Gospels are given as instructors in religious truth. The religion they teach is Christianity. Without them men could not have possessed Christianity. And what Christianity is in any age or nation or church or mind depends entirely upon what the Gospels are to that age or nation or church or mind. Before the Gospels there was religion; and there is religion now where the Gospels are unknown. But religion without the Gospels, whatever else it be, is not Christianity; for there can be no Christianity without some reception and some understanding of the Gospels.

There are many ways in which the Gospels may be and have been viewed; but all of them come under one or other of two classes. In like manner all the many ways in which Christianity has been or may be viewed, arrange themselves in one or other of two great classes. The supernatural element may be acknowledged, or it may be denied. Where it is acknowledged, there may be a right or a wrong understanding of Christian doctrines; where it is denied there is no Christianity whatever.

There are many reasons why those who have in reality no faith in Christianity should be unwilling to confess this to themselves, and more unwilling to confess it to others. They endeavor, therefore, to call unbelief by the name of belief, and give to it the aspect of belief; and every view of Christianity which admits it as a fact, and then excludes the supernatural element, is an endeavor of this kind.

This has been carried much farther of late years than ever before. There are those who profess to accept the Gospels in this way as records of the words and acts of Christ, and to believe a Christianity founded on them. But, through the Gospels, equally through all of them, runs a perpetual attribution of supernatural character, power and action to Jesus Christ. Such persons must get rid of this; and by various arguments and conjectures, as various as the various declarations of the Gospels require, they succeed, to their own satisfaction, in eliminating from all the Gospels, from Jesus Christ, from all His words and all His acts, everything which is more or other than it might have been by natural causes and natural means.

Quite recently this process has reached its consummation. In Renan's *Life of Christ*, an able and eloquent man speaks of Jesus with the warmest admiration, and professes to regard His words as those of one who spake as no other man spake, and His doctrines of morality and life as the highest, the truest and the most efficacious of good that ever were uttered. He never offends by sneers or cold contempt of the believer, and clothes his book with all the attractions of literary excellence. But, with all this, the supernatural element *must*, at all events, in some way or other, be eliminated; for this purpose alone this book was written; and unless it be accomplished this book cannot become, what it was intended and constructed to be, the Gospel of all who are asking for something which shall reconcile absolute naturalism with religion.

This supreme necessity comes at once into antagonism with the most explicit declarations and the most prominent acts of Christ; as, for example, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. This, therefore, must be explained in accordance with naturalism; and this necessity compels this admirer of Jesus Christ to impute to this man of consummate wisdom the utmost weakness and blindness; to present Him as a virtuous

and honest man who is gulled and managed by disciples and friends; to present these disciples and friends as having so much faith in Him as to sacrifice all for His sake, and so little faith in Him that they lie and cheat Him into tricks which may strengthen Him with the multitude. The raising of Lazarus was one of these. Jesus truly believed him to be dead, and endeavored to raise him from the dead, and believed that He had done so; while in fact, Lazarus, Martha and Mary had conspired to play this trick, in order to cheat not only the bystanders, — but Jesus Christ Himself!

I have nothing to say of the utter irrationality of any such explanation of the Gospels, or of the marvellous power of a determined purpose, as it is proved by the fact that such a purpose could have persuaded a man of Renan's intelligence to consider such views rational; or have convinced such men as now accept Renan's theory (and they are many), that they may honestly call an acceptance of this theory, an acceptance of Christianity and the Christian Gospels.

In a future chapter, when I reach the subject of the miracles of Christ, I shall say what I can of the supernatural and the natural, and the relations between them. I would now only say, that through my book I shall endeavor to discern and to exhibit the supernatural element in all the Gospel history, always in connection with the natural upon which it rests as its foundation and ultimate. As the Gospels purport to relate the words and acts of Jesus Christ, and to be a record of His life, it has become a favorite method of exhibiting views held of the Gospels and of Christianity, to do this in a *Life of Jesus*. Hence this life has been written often, and in many ways; for all who call themselves Christians must found their peculiar opinions, whatever they may be, upon the acts and words of Christ. All diversity of doctrine arises from a similar diversity in regard to those acts and words; and only by the view taken of those acts and words can these opinions be justified; and therefore attempts have

frequently been made to exhibit and establish these views, of the events of His life, of His words, and of the nature and character they present, and to draw thence by way of inference, certain doctrines.

I believe that the Church foretold in the Apocalypse under the name of the New Jerusalem, has descended out of heaven upon earth, and is beginning to live upon earth; and that Emanuel Swedenborg has disclosed in his theological writings the truths and principles upon which this Church must rest.

It follows that I shall endeavor to state and illustrate as well as I am able, the Gospels, and the views of the acts and words of Jesus Christ which I derive from the Gospels, and from the "Law and the Prophets" as they treat of Him, by applying to the Bible the truths and principles taught by Swedenborg.

I propose to make but a small book about a subject of vast magnitude. Labors which it is my duty to perform, leave unoccupied but a fragmentary portion of my time and thought; and if I could give to it all my time and thought, I have not sufficient knowledge and ability to do this work as it should be done. But I may indicate, perhaps, how such a work might be done, and what would be its effect and instruction, if better done.

I assume, without the slightest effort to prove it, that the Bible may be believed; and for them only who agree with me on this point do I write.

The central truth of the doctrines of the New Church I suppose to be that which teaches the relation of our Lord to the Bible. These doctrines teach that this relation is something more and other than has ever before been distinctly declared.

While our Lord was on earth, He frequently referred to passages of the Old Testament as predictive of His own states

or acts. But after He rose from the sepulchre, He said unto the two disciples whom He joined on their way to Emmaus, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses, and *all* the prophets? He expounded unto them in *all* the Scriptures, things concerning Himself."

Here we have a positive assertion, that "Moses and all the prophets," or "all the Scriptures," contain things concerning Him. But the doctrine of the New Church declares what may seem to be more than the verses cited declare; namely, that all things in all the Scriptures concern Him; that the whole Scripture, in all its parts, refers to Him; that the Word of God, as a book, is identical with, and in no part removed or separated from, the living and personal Word of God; that the written Word of God is the Book of the Life of the personal Word of God.

This cannot be shown by the literal sense of this Word. In some parts of this sense it may be apparent; in more it may be discovered; but in a very large portion of the literal sense, as in nearly all that is merely historical or ritual, this meaning cannot be seen, unless a spiritual sense is admitted. And probably nothing is more universally known about the New Church, where anything is known of it, than that it asserts that the literal sense of the Bible bears throughout a spiritual sense.

It is now something more than a hundred years since the New Church began in Heaven, and by descent from Heaven upon earth. Since then, this church has exerted some influence outside of itself, in the modification of common opinion and belief. It has done this through its books and preaching; and impressions thus made have passed through minds to other minds; until in many cases, while the impression is strong, and shows itself in the productions issuing from the minds which have received it, it is obvious that its origin was wholly unknown.

Moreover, the church in the heavens, which is growing gradually there as it grows on earth, is not inoperative. Always the influence of the heavens respects the freedom of men, and works through that freedom; and while it leads and bends, never forces or overwhelms human minds. And in many ways this influence has been exerted to construct the new earth which is to be a proper basis for the new heaven. And to this end all the influences of this church on earth and in heaven co-operate.

One of the effects thus produced seems to me a preparation for a wider reception among religious men, of this doctrine of a spiritual sense of Scripture; and I have already referred to it as having that effect.

The religious world may now be considered as divided into three classes. Those who hold to the literal Bible sternly and without compromise, and believing that its every word must be true (or that if any untruth be in it its whole character is changed and its whole authority lost), declare that wherever science contradicts it, it is science which must be mistaken; and they look to the farther development and improvement of science, for that rejection of its present conclusions, which will bring it back into harmony with the inspired Scriptures.

Secondly, those who adopt some form of what passes under the general name of Rationalism, and believing that there is such a thing as religious truth, believe also that human reason is fully able to discover it and apply it to life without supernatural aid; and that no such aid has ever been given; and that the Bible is only a most excellent book, of human composition, and liable to human error, although on the whole containing a great preponderance of salutary truth. It is no uncommon thing for such persons to say something like this: "Yes; the writers of the Bible were inspired: and so were Plato, and Newton, and Shakespeare."

The third class consists of those who hold firmly to their

Bible, and cannot doubt that its writers were so inspired by the Spirit of God, that they wrote the words of God, and that these must be true. But at the same time they cannot deny some of the conclusions of science; and they appreciate some of its probabilities, and discern the dissonance between these and the Scriptures in their literal sense. And therefore they hope that some way will be discovered to reconcile these two apparent opposites. They hope, in the words of John Robinson of Leyden, who more than any other man may be regarded as the religious founder of New England, that "new and brighter light is yet destined to break forth from the Word of God:" and they see no other basis for this hope, than the doctrine of a spiritual sense of this Word.

They who hold this hope are of course encouraged by the fact that in the early ages of Christianity, and indeed far down in its history, this belief was common among the fathers. But this encouragement is weakened by the other fact, that the fathers of the church, in their attempts to discover and disclose this spiritual sense, were guided by no distinct method or system or principles, and wandered into inconsistencies and puerilities. And there are strong and instructed minds in the Old Church, who, without using, or at least without acknowledging any aid from the New Church, seem to be now laboring to devise a system of interpretation, which shall avoid the illusions which they fear, and give them the light they seek.

Another circumstance which we think will assist the recognition of a correspondence between the things of the spiritual universe and the things of the material universe, is that at this time natural science is advancing upon a line which, while apparently distinct from these endeavors after a spiritual sense, and wholly irrelevant to them, is yet a converging line, which may soon meet these inquirers after religious truth: for a scientific dogma, to which I have already referred, has

recently been freely asserted by master-minds in science, and, I believe, widely adopted, which may supply these inquirers with precisely the principle they need.

This dogma is the presence and activity of Reason in Nature.

It is now certain that astronomy altogether, and many natural sciences in a less degree, and nearly all of them in some degree, can be seen to rest on the assumption, that whatever the human mind can discover, and demonstrate by logical and geometrical methods to be certain and inevitable laws of human reason, these are found to be the certain and absolute laws of the material universe. I do not pause to cite instances. But any one who reads these lines, and will remember what is the foundation and instrument of astronomy, for example, will see that this science depends, both for its certainty and for its progress, upon the discovery, development, and rigorous demonstration of the geometrical laws of reason, and the assumption that they are the absolute directors of the material universe.

All men who see this will admit that this reason, in man and in nature, is one; and this truth is now forcing itself into acceptance. But here, too, the freedom of the human intellect is preserved; and he who loves infidelity will be able to infer that the universe, within man and without man, is but a stupendous machinery, which goes on in perfect independence and self-sufficiency, with no need of, and no help or control from, any other power; and there are eminent men who now make this perversion of this truth.

But the religious man will be more disposed to conclude, that this One Reason must be the Reason of the One God; that it comes down to the mind of man, and clothes itself and operates in and by all the laws and forms and activities of thought; and that it comes down into the external universe, and clothes itself and operates in and by all the laws and forms and activities of matter. And then he may be pre-

pared to see, that these two forms, effects and manifestations of the One Reason stand in absolute and necessary correlation and correspondence with each other.

When this is clearly seen and known, — and that time must come, — the science which teaches this correspondence will rest upon exact and rigorous demonstration; and it will be seen to be the centre and the life of all science. Then every truth that shall be discovered and established concerning any entity or force or law in the universe, will be acknowledged as having the character, in some degree at least, of a universal truth; rational efforts will be made to extend its application and utility; and thus, gradually and successively, the darkest corners of the universe of mind and the universe of matter will be explored and investigated.

With these high aspirations and unbounded hopes I have nothing now to do; I have only to use the Science of Correspondence in its reference to the written Word. Here, the fundamental truth, as stated and shown by Swedenborg, is, that the spiritual sense of the Word is continuous and perfect. This is clothed by a literal or natural sense, which, so far as the nature of things permitted, is also true. But in many places in the prophets, and in some of the historical narrations, this spiritual sense or truth has clothed itself in language which has no other truth than its internal truth. But wherever the literal sense expresses the commandment of God, given to regulate the moral conduct of man, and so bring his external life into harmony with his spiritual life, there this external literal sense has eternal and Divine truth, holiness, and authority. And if this Science of Correspondence is accurately applied to the Word of God as a book and to the Word of God as a person, they will be found to be identical.

Our Lord came to earth only to provide new means and methods for the salvation of man: for his salvation from his sins; for the birth and growth of a new life within him; for

his regeneration. The written Word of God has throughout this end and no other end. And the spiritual sense of Scripture shows how its every verse was written for this end; and how our Lord, in every word and every act, spoke and acted for this end.

Swedenborg, in the many instances which he gives, and in the principles which he lays down, enables us now to use this science as a science. We cannot always use it with certainty and everywhere; for the plain reason, that this science, like every other, has its beginning, its growth and development; and it is now only in its beginning.

It is this Science of Correspondence which I shall apply, as well as I am able, to the records of our Lord's life on earth. And so far as I am able to comprehend and use this science without error, I shall show the absolute Unity of our Lord's Life. By this is meant, not merely its unity, or consistence and completeness in itself; but the unity of what He said and what He did as recorded in the Gospels, and what He then taught and then did in the spiritual world, and what He is always teaching and doing in the soul of man; the absolute Unity of the Divine Life, in its whole action, and its whole operation, purpose and end.

OF THE APPARENT DISORDER AND CONFLICT IN THE GOSPELS.

The Gospels do not form, and they do not contain, anything which can seem to a reader, in its literal sense, a logical exposition of a wide belief, with its parts well adjusted for mutual support and illustration, and its statements advancing step by step, in gradual sequence and evolution. There is indeed little apparent order or connection in the successive statements of Truth in the Gospels. What order or connection there is differs in the different Gospels, and in all of

them appears to be casual and fragmentary. The three first Gospels may be brought into some harmony as to the sequence of events and statements; but the fourth Gospel cannot easily be brought within this harmony.

This disconnected and fragmentary character belongs in some degree even to the Sermon on the Mount, which, more than any other long passage in the Gospels, has the appearance of a continuous discourse. And, for the most part, the words of our Lord appear as remarks and instructions called forth, day by day, by ever-varying circumstances; and sometimes they appear to have but little reference to these circumstances.

All this has been often observed; and it has been made, by unbelievers, the ground for argument against the Divine origin or authority of the Scriptures. Then it has been replied by believers, that these characteristics indicate that the Gospels are not a merely human work; because they exhibit the Gospels as the very opposite of all they would have been, if they were but an effort of human reason to persuade or convince, or to found a new system of faith.

But much more may be said of these characteristics. They can be explained only by a clear understanding of the Divine purposes, and of the order and the principles which prevail in the working out of these purposes, and of the necessity of human freedom, as always existing, and always provided for by the Lord, in all that He does for the salvation of men; and this understanding, applied to the Gospels, illustrates their character, and is itself illustrated by their character.

Our nearest approach to an idea of God is as a Being whose love is perfect, and whose wisdom is perfect, and to whose power there can be no limit, excepting that which may be imposed by His own perfect wisdom.

It is but another way of saying that perfect love must love perfectly, when I say that it must desire to give to others the

utmost good. And then it follows, that the one purpose of God, which includes all others and prompts all others, is to create and provide for beings, to whom He may impart His own love and wisdom and happiness, in an ever-growing measure.

Then, that this can be done only by the creation and preservation of immortal beings, who shall have their own personality, their own selfhood, and who by virtue thereof shall be and remain *THEMSELVES*; who shall have entire freedom, and the responsibility of freedom, even while they live only from Him; and who may learn to receive His Divine gifts of life and happiness in that freedom.

From this it follows obviously and necessarily, that whatsoever God may do for man, it is an incomplete work, until man does his part, — that part of the work which it is permitted him to do, and which it lies on him to do; and this part is, to receive the inflowing life from God, not passively, and not as yielding to controlling power, but actively, by his own choice, in freedom, and so to make it a part of his new-born self.

Let me re-state this view in what may be a simpler form. The highest possible happiness for a human being must be that of receiving voluntarily, as of himself, and by his own willing co-operation, Divine goodness into his affections, and Divine wisdom into his understanding, and thus making them to be his own. These Divine elements are necessarily finited and limited for his reception, and by his reception. But they need not be perverted. And in the degree in which they are voluntarily received and not perverted, they constitute his happiness. They may be received in any degree or measure, from the least to the greatest. They may be perverted in him or unperverted. All this must depend upon himself. But, if his highest happiness must be the receiving them and making them to be his own, by his own choice, and his own voluntary co-operation, this must be *the* happiness which his

Father, by the necessity of His own infinite love, must desire to give him. And, therefore, that they may be so received, the man must be able to receive the gifts of God, or to reject them, as he may prefer; to pervert them, or not to pervert them. In other words, he must be free; free to choose this day whom he will serve; free to make this choice, and to rise or fall by this choice, every day and every hour. More than this. He not only may make this choice, but he must make it. It is his necessity; and therefore it is within his ability. And therefore, again, it must be the constant effort of Divine Providence to give to him always, and preserve for him always, as far as may be possible, this Freedom.

They who do not know this law, or do not know that it springs from infinite love, may regret a distinction between spiritual truth and natural truth, which is nevertheless certain. Natural truth may be proved by evidence that is wholly irrespective of affection or character, and compels belief. As soon as a child understands what *two*, and *three*, and *five*, mean, he cannot but know and be sure, that two and three make five. The same thing is true if we ascend to the loftiest heights which mathematics has ever climbed. It is not so with any religious truth. There is not, there never was, and there never will be, any religious truth, as to which reasons may not be found sufficient for doubt with him who prefers to doubt, or for rejection with him who desires to reject. But, for all this, there is greater certainty about spiritual truth than about natural truth. Origen said long ago, and Jeremy Taylor quotes and adopts the saying, "That knowledge which comes from goodness is more Divine and more certain than demonstration." Or, as Swedenborg expresses it, "Truth is seen from good, and in no case without good."

Let us now apply this principle to the Gospels. On the one hand, they never present to the intellect an array of truths marshalled and armed with invincible logic, or with

such force of systematic argument or exposition, that consent would be compelled. Nowhere do they attempt to move the emotional nature with appeals to love, or fear, or any passion, so strong as to make resistance impossible. Never do they so address any man, that if he loves better to close his mind and his heart than to permit their entrance and operation, he has no power of choice.

But, on the other hand, they now declare and now intimate, now present with startling force and clearness, and now only suggest, truths which will be sure to enter if the door be opened to them, and sure to bring light and life and blessing wherever they are permitted to enter.

When our Lord was on earth, and spoke to those about Him, the Gospels show us that the words which attracted and bound to Him those who were ready to be His disciples, and were to them as the bread of life, were only foolishness to those who were wise in their own conceit, and repelled those who could have no inward sympathy with Him, and inflamed the enmity of those who hated Him.

Religious truth of any kind can be received by the understanding and implanted in the heart, only in freedom, and only by that voluntary choice and assent, which cannot exist without freedom. And the Gospels are so written, with so much of seeming irregularity, uncertainty, and even inconsistency, and the truths they reveal are so expressed, that no one of these truths ever does more than *invite* acceptance; and always presents itself in such a way, that it is as easy for a mind which does not welcome it to reject it, as it is for a mind which does welcome it to receive it.

For example, the central doctrine of Christianity is that which tells us that Jesus Christ was and is Immanuel, "God with us." And yet they who read the Gospels, with the desire, consciously or unconsciously, of seeing in Him only a man like themselves, — better, wiser, stronger, — but only such a man as they may be, — have always found and will

always find in the Gospels that which permits them to believe this ; and to believe it in such a way, and with such modifications, as suit them. While they whose mind and character lead them to look upon Him as one with the Father, see in the same Gospels enough to assure them that in the beginning He was with God and was God. *They* see, as they see the sun at noon-day, that in Him, He who is infinite Love, bowed the heavens and came down, and took upon Himself a human nature, with its whole capacity of human suffering, that so He might save His children ; — they see this, until their hearts burn with the full recognition of this infinite and inconceivable goodness.

In thus coming with overpowering violence upon no mind or heart, but offering to all, all that can be received, the Gospels reflect, as in a mirror, the whole course of Divine Providence in relation to mankind, and to every hour of every man's life.

It is also important to know and to remember, that while religious truth is always so presented that it can be received only when it is welcomed, its power for good wherever it is so received is not thereby in the slightest degree lessened or obstructed.

For an illustration of this, we may look to the history of Christianity. The truths presented in the Gospels, in any of the various forms they there assume, have within them infinite power. They were given to reconstruct human society ; and they are competent to do this. The little we have yet seen of a work whose indefinite endurance will be, as the ages roll on, still in its beginning, justifies our saying that Christianity, as revealed in the Gospels, and taught by the disciples of our Lord, and filled with His influence, was and is a power, which has promoted the growth, development, purification, and exaltation of human thought, affection, and character, far more than any other of the instruments of Providence has ever done ; while, through all its centuries,

it has submitted to the law of human freedom, and owes its many perversions and falsifications to the abuse of this freedom.

Already the experience of mankind has taught thoughtful persons the marvellous power possessed by the truths of Christianity, of growth, of development with circumstances calling for it, and of adaptation to the circumstances, and to all the questions and needs presented by the ever-varying phases of society and humanity. But now a new evidence of this power has come, too vast and too diverse from all that was known before to be readily accepted. It comes as the revelation of a spiritual sense of the Scriptures, founded upon the correspondence between natural and spiritual things.

Because the revelations made for the New Church are higher in their character and their instruction than any which were ever made before, they therefore necessarily demand, for the establishment of the New Church, in the world, and in every man's mind, a larger measure of freedom, and a higher character of freedom, than earlier dispensations required.

A mistake constantly and perhaps inevitably made by all who stand outside of this church, and against which they who endeavor to come within it are not always on their guard, is, to regard it as narrow and sectarian. This is indeed a mistake. Its truth is wide as the universe; and wider, for it embraces God. It is God, unveiling the infinite Wisdom which comes to man in His Word. It is not merely a new doctrine, or a new set of doctrines, concerning any especial topics. It is a new way of understanding all things. It is a new system of thought and truth, which embraces all thought and all truth. It cannot come within the complete comprehension of any man or any men, to-day, or a thousand years hence, or ever. It is a revelation of the central principles of truth; and because they are infinite, itself is infinite; and it will be infinite in its growth, and eternal in its development;

forever offering to them who go farthest, treasures that invite and reward farther progress.

Nor is it a hard, rejecting, unsympathizing truth. It is a reconciling truth. It acknowledges that from the first moment of human thought, Divine truth came to man, and constituted all the light of that thought; and that, ever since, it has come to men as it could, and abode with them as it could; fragmentary, and with its fragments clouded and distorted, and almost concealed by the falsities which men have mingled with it. But there it still was, Divine Truth, giving to men all the light they had. And now a church has been established, which will give to men a higher order and a larger measure of Truth, and recognize and gather together all these fragments, and bring them into order and harmony and wholeness, and breathe into them a new life. This work it has not finished, and never will finish; but it has begun this work, even to our dim and feeble apprehension.

It is a reconciling truth. It accepts cordially whatever of good there was in the last extreme of self-renunciation of which asceticism ever dreamed; and as cordially, an interest in all the work and all the activity of social or business life, as earnest and active as that of the merest worldling. It looks upon the exuberant beauty of creation, and seeks it, and enjoys it, and will portray it, as art has never yet done. It interprets the music of the summer wind upon its living harps, and gives new sweetness to the old, old melody, for it gives to it new meaning. It tastes gladly and gratefully all the innocent pleasures which are given to man. All these things are, in its embrace, neither conflicting nor discordant. All are reconciled by the truth that they are all gifts from God; that we may recognize within them His laws, His purpose, and His Presence; and that when we so receive and use His gifts, His purpose is accomplished, and we are day by day created more and more into His image and likeness. Even this truth has always been seen, and has always given

to men the best guidance which they had ; but it was seen only as the diffused light of a hidden sun is seen in a clouded and tempestuous day.

It is indeed a reconciling truth. Under its influence, self-renunciation and self-sacrifice are wise and safe ; for they become the sacrifice of self-trust as our only guidance, and of the love of self as our prevailing motive. The beauty of the universe becomes a living and an ever-growing beauty, when we discern its meaning, and see that it points upwards to Him whose love and wisdom clothe themselves in beauty as in their fitting garment. The most active interest in the business of life is consecrated by the desire of acting as His instrument and under His direction, in the performance of the work which He gives us to do ; and all innocent pleasures are purified and exalted into happiness by the acknowledgment and the perception that they are the gifts of a loving Father.

And through all this, and that it may do all this, it everywhere enlarges, elevates and preserves the freedom of every man ; and at the same time exerts the strongest influence to guard this freedom from being corrupted into license.

The claims of New Church Truth may by their very magnitude repel belief. They may seem, for this reason, to have an aspect not only of arrogance, but of improbability, or even of impossibility. It is undoubtedly reasonable to require that the evidence of any asserted truth shall bear some proportion to its importance ; and in every-day life we act upon this principle. It would follow, therefore, that the evidence of New Church Truth should be cogent, complete, and fully sufficient to satisfy every rational mind which can be willing to love the good from which this truth proceeds and to which it leads. This we admit ; and then we say it is supported by just such evidence. And we suggest another principle of familiar recognition. It is, that if claims or assertions, by reason of their magnitude and importance,

require proofs of unusual character and force, such proofs of such claims need candid and careful investigation, in the manner which is proper to proofs of that kind, before they can be judged of aright.

Now the evidence of this newly revealed Truth is almost wholly internal; its highest and most conclusive evidence entirely internal. The reason of this may be found in what has been already stated; namely, that Divine Providence preserves for the human mind a higher and more nearly perfect freedom, in proportion as the religious truth revealed is of a higher character; and, therefore, this new revelation of religious truth comes in such a form, and by such means, as may interfere in the least possible degree with human freedom. Hence there is an entire absence of miraculous attestation; for miracles have a strong tendency to compel the belief of the reluctant. And this new Truth is so offered to men, as to be acceptable only to those who welcome it, and who welcome it because they desire the instruction which they can see that it offers, and the goodness to which they can see that it promises to lead them.

In one sense, this Truth is certainly offered to all; and they who receive it must receive it each in his or her own way; each with the measure and the kind of effort which his or her character makes necessary. For there can be no advance either in wisdom or in goodness, without effort; or without our doing the work which is given us to do. There are those to whose minds this Truth, or at least its elements, come recommended by their own worth, and encounter no indurated unbelief, and no confirmed opposing principles, or habits of thought. Such persons welcome each truth as they see it, because it is grateful to their hearts and to their understandings. They see it by its own light, and as if by intuition. They see it because they love the good, the purity, the peace, to which the truth leads, and "love giveth insight." But even such persons may find that difficulties

come to them at a later period. In this life, even if we tread the holy land, we cannot but find it a land of hills and valleys. And another thing is certain,—they who do indeed receive this Truth must encounter the toil, the struggle, and the perils which are inevitable for those who would do more than understand this Truth,—who would make God's gift the law of their lives and the life of their lives; who would lose their life that they may save their life; who would lose their natural, earthly, sensuous and selfish life, that they may have in its stead the new life that comes to those who are "born of water and the spirit," in the highest meaning of those solemn words.

To other minds, perhaps to most, the process of mere belief, of mere reception into the understanding, may be slow, gradual, and difficult. It is discovered only step by step, how truth after truth answers the hard questions which have perplexed the thoughtful in all ages, and throws a light—often a light of beauty and of glory—into dark corners of science and religion, which had seemed to be the very homes of clouds and shadows.

The real progress of the church in every mind, and in all minds, or upon the earth, must be very slow. The work it has to do is that of changing the heart, and character, and life; a work of vast extent and equal difficulty; a work which, I will again repeat, must be done in each and all, in and by and through human freedom; and by reason of this fundamental and perpetual requirement, cannot be done otherwise than slowly and laboriously.

It is not to be denied, that the claims of the New Church are transcendent. They cover nothing less than the whole of human thought, knowledge, belief, and life, through the whole future. It would indeed be a false humility which would deny that its pretensions are magnificent; and more so than words can express or thought measure. For there is no department of science or philosophy or religion, or of morality,

or of social or political or national life, or of any of the relations between man and the earth he inhabits, between man and his neighbor, between earth and the spiritual world, or between the created universe, whether material or spiritual, and its constant creator, God, for which this church does not promise instruction.

But then this promise can be fulfilled to an extent which shall seem great in comparison with the whole, only in far distant ages. We live only in the beginning. And let it not be forgotten that the same reasons which make it certain that the progress of the church must be gradual, slow and laborious, make it equally certain that it must be feeble and imperfect in its beginning. Over this beginning we who see it may rejoice; and it would be strange if we did not. But while we rejoice at the gift now offered to mankind, at the light which shines upon our own dark places,—rejoice in the vivid perception that it comes from and leads to the source of all good, as they rejoice upon whom the sun rises after a dark night on a tossing ocean, and who look along the path of light that lies upon the waves and points to the distant sun and reveals its presence,—even while we so rejoice, we must still bewail our own imperfect reception; our own imperfect understanding of the glorious truths revealed; and if we attempt to tell them to others, our own most imperfect utterance.

Let it not be forgotten, that the crowning glory of man, the greatest gift which infinite love could bestow, and the one condition on which alone all the higher gifts from God to man are possible, is human freedom. Then let it not be forgotten, that because man possesses freedom, all higher gifts are possible, and infinite love may build up in him, a possibility of receiving even such happiness as infinite love would desire to impart. And then let it not be forgotten, that if, upon the possession of our freedom the possibility of our progress depends, the same freedom makes it possible that we

may refuse to advance,—that we may prefer to descend. And then, instead of going upward step by step, along the unending series of truths at the summit of which—never to be reached—stands Divine Wisdom, we may go down, step by step, into the abyss of falsehood. And whether we go upwards or downwards, depends upon which of these two classes of beliefs—the true or the false—is that towards which we turn an affirmative and accepting mind, or a negative and rejecting mind.

The mind which holds sensuous knowledge and sensuous reasoning, not only as furnishing the indispensable materials of intelligence, but as the primary and only trustworthy source of instruction, and undertakes to discover spiritual truth by the light of this illumination,—such a mind is in an *affirmative* state only as to sensuous things and knowledges and sciences and philosophies, and is, whatever it may persuade itself to believe of itself, in a distinctly *negative* state as to all spiritual truths and spiritual knowledges. It is in an affirmative state as to nature and everything which it can bring within the name and character of the natural; but is in a negative state as to all which it must admit to be supernatural. The consummation of this state is the absolute denial of the supernatural in all existence, all science, and all religion. And if there be not many who have reached this consummation confessedly and consciously, all are on the way to it who bring the natural to sit in judgment upon the supernatural. This is now the prevailing, and almost the universal, way; and hence it is that all idea of the supernatural is in almost all minds, vague, uncertain and unreal.

Where there is a disposition to deny spiritual truth, there is, I repeat, nothing in the evidence which is offered or can be offered, to prevent the indulgence of this disposition. Every man asserts and supposes that he is ready to believe anything on sufficient evidence. It is now quite a fashion for those who would cast everything supernatural out of their

Christianity, to say that they do not deny the possibility of miracles. O no; they are perfectly ready to believe them on adequate evidence. The gospels say that Jesus raised Lazarus from death. But when — where — how? In an ignorant and uncritical age which saw the supernatural everywhere, among a most ignorant and superstitious people, and before no witnesses disposed or qualified to examine critically such a circumstance. Let the same thing be done after due notice, before competent and watchful judges, not once only, but so often as to dispel reasonable suspicion of jugglery or illusion, — and then we shall believe it at once! Then we accept it as *a fact*; and explain it or class it with other facts as we can. But what else is this, than to say we are perfectly ready to accept a miracle as soon as it becomes *not* a miracle? Are they ready, are they, while in that state of mind, able to believe anything *as* a miracle? Any fact *thus* taking place, would become at once a *natural* fact; and they would at once set themselves at work to find forces or laws of nature to explain it; and all such inquirers would be sure to find what explained it to them, however they might differ as to the explanation.

The question of belief or unbelief of any religious truth depends always on the evidence offered, and also on the disposition to believe or to deny. Now there are, as has been already said, two classes of truths; two classes into which all truths are divisible. One class consists of those which relate to the outer world, and its laws and forces, and the senses and what the senses reveal or indicate; and so to all that is within the category of time and space and is commonly included under the name of nature. While truths of the other class relate to the spirit, and to things of the spirit, all of which are within and above nature and its laws and forces and sciences.

All that was said of the power and effect of choice and disposition applies perfectly here. There is nothing what-

ever in the operations of Providence, or in the laws of His universe, which would prevent any man from cordially accepting and clinging to either of these classes of truths, and rejecting and denying the others, if he has and indulges the disposition to so do. But he does so, in either case, at his own peril. These two classes of truths are not independent, and still less are they antagonistic. He who knows all that is knowable of the outer world, possesses nothing but the dead shell, the innutritious husks of knowledge, if he closes his mind against all truth which relates to the inner world. While he who learns and loves only the knowledge of spirit in its transcendental elevation, abandons all use of the very means and methods provided to enable him to see the highest truths brought down within his apprehension, illustrated in action and embodiment, and resting on immovable foundations.

He who is in the negative as to both of these classes of truths can learn nothing; he who is in the negative as to either cannot learn that, and will understand the other imperfectly; and he only can understand both and grow in wisdom as to both, who is in the affirmative as to both, and arranges them in his mind in due subordination.

No man, I repeat, ever says that he is in a negative mood. All that any one ever supposes is, that he is cautious and reasonable, on his guard against deception, not disposed to fall into common follies, ready to believe on evidence, but believing only on adequate evidence! Men constantly deceive themselves by uttering such things as these. Behind them all, the question ever remains, are you in the affirmative or are you in the negative? This does not mean, are you so disposed to believe as to be credulous and easy and prone to self-deception; *but do you love the truth—that truth—* about which you inquire; if so, you may do justice to the evidence and the truth; if not so, you cannot and you will not.

Nor is it of any use for any man to tell himself or his neighbors, that he inclines neither way, but stands upon the exact middle point of absolute justice. Upon this point the human mind cannot stand; it must incline one way or the other; and if too much in either way it will lose its balance. But if it inclines to disbelief, it will find disbelief. The inclination must be towards the truth, not enough to supplement evidence by conjecture and ignore the difference between them; not enough to silence or pervert reason; not enough to accept as a logical conclusion what is only a fantasy; but enough to offer to Truth whenever it presents itself, an honest and cordial welcome.

I shall again, and in another connection, consider the "natural and the supernatural," and especially in reference to the miracles of the Gospels.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE BIRTH AND NATURE OF OUR LORD.

OF THE JEWS.

THE Jews regard themselves, and are regarded by others, as a peculiar people. They have passed through strange experiences, which are recorded in Scriptures. These constitute a volume which they call *The Book*, or *The Word*; and it is believed by them, and by Christians generally, to have been written by inspiration from God.

This volume contains the history of that people from their beginning to the time when it was written; and this history is preceded by one which purports to be the history of the world from its creation to the beginning of the Jewish nation. The volume also contains many devotional writings, and others of a peculiar character which are commonly called by Christians, as well as Jews, prophetic.

Through a large part of this book intimations occur of a promised deliverer or redeemer. From the feebleness of the Jews, and the sufferings they had endured from conquerors and oppressors, these intimations were of peculiar interest to them.

About two thousand years ago the hope was quite general among them and quite strong, that the promised deliverer, or messiah, would soon come; and this hope strengthened for the next century or two; and there is some evidence that among surrounding nations about the same time, a somewhat similar expectation existed.

A little less than nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ was born in Judea, and near to Bethlehem. He lived upon earth about thirty-three years; and during his life presented himself as the Messiah who had been promised to the Jews.

Thus, the Messiah, whom they had long and anxiously expected, and ardently desired, came. But, instead of being welcomed by them, and acknowledged, and exalted to his due supremacy, he was denied, rejected and crucified.

The reason of this was, that he was not *that* Messiah which they expected and desired. He was not a hero, a conqueror, a deliverer, a redeemer, a king, in the sense and in the way in which they supposed that he would be, and wished him to be.

He was all these, but in a very different way; and therefore they had no faith in Him, no recognition of Him, and no love for Him; but despised and rejected Him.

He was as much more than they expected or desired, as the soul is more than the body; as eternity is more than time; as God is more than man. He was a man; but although He walked among men, one with them, He was God.

OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 There was a man sent from God whose name *was* John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

9 *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name :

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me.—
JOHN i. 1-15.

These verses may be regarded as an introduction to the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The word of a man is the expression, the form, the body of his thought, and the means by which that thought is made known. The Word of God is the utterance and manifestation of that which is, in Him, infinite Wisdom. It is His wisdom expressing and embodying itself in the language or before the sense and sight of men; and it is the means by which that wisdom is made known to man. And in Jesus Christ it was embodied and impersonated.

It was in the beginning; because the Wisdom of God expressing itself is the origin, the first cause, the beginning of everything. It was with God, because the infinite Wisdom is one of the essential elements of the divine nature, and, in conjunction with infinite Love constitutes God. And the divine wisdom expressing itself in its fruits was and ever is God; is God in operation; is the creating, preserving, and governing God. For by His Wisdom were all things made which were made.

In Him is Life: because the infinite creating and preserving God makes alive by imparting of His own Life; for there is no other life. And this life, entering as wisdom into the understanding of men, and therein by infinite love perfectly

accommodated to him, becomes man's wisdom, and is all there is of light within him. And it is thus that this light enlighteneth every man who cometh into the world. Or, as the verse may also be translated, it is this light "which coming into the world enlighteneth every man."

But this world thus made, and vivified and preserved by Him, knows Him not when He is in it by His love and wisdom and providence, and knew Him not when He was in it in form and person. Always there are some who know Him; or the world would perish; and to all who then received Him, and to all who ever receive Him, — and He is ever coming to all and asking to be received, — to all, of every age, and name, and nation, and religion, who receive Him in the forms or in the instruction in which He presents Himself to them, even to all who believe in Him, and love that in which He thus comes to them, He gives the power to become the sons of God, whether they ever know His name while they are on earth, or not.

They who believe in Him, receive Him. All receive Him in the way and in the degree in which they believe Him; and in the more general sense, a belief in the truths which He gives or ever gave to any age or nation or in any form for the salvation of man, is to believe Him. It is to receive the Wisdom of God, as given to man. It is to receive Him, for He comes in the Truth He gives. Belief in Him is a belief that God is our Father, and is wise and good, and ever striving to give us of His wisdom and goodness, and that we are poor and miserable and evil, except as we receive what He offers. To believe this is to receive what he offers, for it is He who offers to us this truth which we could never discover for ourselves. To believe this is to be born again, with the new Life which is not only His, but is unperturbed, and therefore is no longer made evil continually by our own perversions and those proclivities which we inherit. We are now born again, with a new life; with His life; and are His sons.

The word was made flesh in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. John says, *we* beheld His glory; he says this speaking of himself, and of all who were, and all who ever shall be His disciples. For all such ever see Him as only glorious; as alone having the glory of the perfectly uncorrupted divine life from the Father; the glory as of His only begotten. And all such see him always, perfect in love and in wisdom, full of grace and truth.

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man, whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favored, the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? — LUKE i. 26-34.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph, her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which *was* spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel ; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife. — MATT. i. 18-25.

These verses declare that our Lord was conceived of a virgin, and born of a virgin, and that his father was God.

This is the first fact to be believed by them who would have, as Christians, the salvation promised to them who believe on Him. There are those who deny all credence to the gospels, and make no pretence to the name of Christians. There are others who claim this name, but narrow their faith until their theories of life or "the laws of nature," are satisfied. But there is one fact which is not to be avoided ; it cannot be taken out of the gospels and leave anything behind ; for any supposition of "interpolation" or "myth" or "forgery" can be applied just as well to any other part of the gospels and to the whole of them, as to these parts, there being not the least evidence of anything of this kind. This fact, which is thus inevitable to all who would be Christians, is, that Jesus had God for his father, and had no other Father but God.

Here then is a fact to be believed, if anything is to be believed. If we reject it because we do not understand it, or for any reason, or for no reason, we reject with it the *truth and authority* of the Christian Gospels. We may still admire them or parts of them ; and may prefer them very much to the best things in the Koran or in the works of Plato, or of Confucius, or anywhere else. But we no longer believe the Christian Gospels as thoroughly and authoritatively truthful records of a revelation from God.

Then let us accept this fact in all simplicity. Let us look upon our Lord as the Son of God, without mental reserve or prevarication.

The New Church tells us *how* and *why* He was the Son of

God. It tells us at least so much of this, that we may *begin* to understand this Truth. But we must not forget that it is, of necessity, very mysterious. The conception and birth of any living thing is a mystery before which science veils its face. But in Jesus Christ, the infinite and eternal God came down to a human being, and the Divine and the Human became perfectly combined to give life, and being, and human personality to one who was to be born and to live and to die as a man. The Word was thus made Flesh.

To the first Christian Church no explanation whatever was given. To the second Christian Church, or the New Jerusalem Church, an explanation has been given. Enough of explanation to place our Lord before us, most distinctly, as the object of worship; as Him whom we should love with all our soul and strength; as Him towards whom all in the heavens turn as to the source of all their love, their wisdom and their happiness. And enough to assure us, that what we know is the beginning of infinite wisdom, which will grow forever, as our enlarging capacity for wisdom admits more light.

Within the person of Jesus Christ was the infinite God; but His external nature was wholly derived from Mary. Hence, in general terms, His internal was divine and His external human.

Every person and everything has an internal and an external. Every internal must have an external, or it has no actual existence. Every external must have an internal; or it has no essence, no quality, no individuality, and has no being. or is not.

This is not the place to expatiate on this topic, or attempt to pursue it with any fulness of statement or illustration. It was well understood once; but has been forgotten; and its novelty now may make it obscure. But something of it we must understand, if we would understand anything of that Being whose internal was divine, and his external human; and whose work of mercy and redemption brought this exter-

nal human into obedience to and absolute union with the divine internal.

It may help us to understand the difference and the relation between the external and the internal of man, if we remember that he stands between that which is lower than himself and that which is higher. Below and outside of him is the world in which he lives, and all things there; and with all these he has some relations. Because he has these relations, and a work to do in this outward world, and must look to it for the means of sustaining life, and for many of his enjoyments and a large part of his activity,—for all these reasons, he has certain faculties and inclinations and tastes adapted to these things; or, in other words, he is himself adapted to them by certain organs of his body, by his senses, and by certain qualities, capacities and dispositions of his mind. And all there is of the man, which thus lays hold of the outer world and that which grows out of and depends upon this outer world,—all there is of the man which comes in contact with this world by the touch, by the senses, or by thoughts or affections which are in immediate relation to this world,—all this part of the man is the external of the man, or the external man. And if he had only this part, whatever might be the degree of its culture or development, he would be little more than a cultivated and developed animal.

He has however not only this part of himself, but another part; and of these two parts the whole man consists. He is an animal, because he has an external man; but he is also more than an animal, because he has what no other animals have, an internal man. He has a twofold aspect; one turns towards lower and outer things and is adequate to them; and this is his external man. The other turns towards higher and inner things and is adequate to them; and this is his internal man.

These higher and inner things are not things of sense, for they are things of thought and affection. But neither are

they things of *such* thought and affection as are not only born of the senses and the outlying world, but cling to them, and have no life nor strength nor joy except in their connection with or relation to the things of that world. These inner and higher things are things of inner and higher thought, affection, desire, activity and enjoyment.

The internal of man looks upward; on what? God is above man; heaven is above man; the happiness of growth in wisdom, of unselfish love, of the recognition of God in this world and in His laws and Providence, and progress in the ability to love and worship and obey Him, and to love others as His children and therefore our brethren,—all this is higher than the thoughts or the delights of mere worldliness or sensuousness; and therefore the internal man, because it looks upwards, looks to all these things.

But the man consists of these two elements of being; of both; he is a man because he consists of both; and one is as necessary as the other, because both are indispensable. The internal could not exist without the external, any more than a man could live without some form, some way of being. Nor can the external of man exist without the internal man, because it is this which constitutes him a man, and without this he would not be a human being.

The two are equally indispensable. And as nothing can be gained by the effort to destroy or paralyze either, so also it is not wise to cultivate and invigorate and nourish with indulgence and enjoyment, the one of these at the expense of the other.

Practically, one who lives only in the external, lives only in his lower faculties; and whatever may be the appearance of refinement or cultivation about him, he gradually loses all that it is possible for him to lose of that which distinguishes him from the lower animals.

On the other hand, one who lives wholly in the internal, makes no use of the means provided for him to grow into

the fulness of a true manhood. He abandons that plane of life upon which he can enter into true relations with his brethren. His affections and his thoughts have no sufficient foundation, no field suitable for their constant and healthy exercise, and they lose the guides and restraints and conditions which are mercifully provided for him, and without them his affections will be either dissipated into nothingness, or else become self-centred; and his thoughts will become mere fantasies.

The external and the internal man are both and equally necessary and indispensable. But the great and eternal question is, which of them rules the other.

We have an internal man, opened upward, and are thereby made truly men, because thereby good influences may enter into the internal and fill it and be appropriated by it and made its own,—and then come out into the external man, and bring that into obedience and conformity. The internal man does not seek to slay or paralyze the external man, but to fill it with life; with the life itself has received from above. This is the true work of human life; it is the great end for which we live in this world.

This work may not be done. It is, like all our duty and all our happiness, submitted to our freedom. The end for which we ought to live may be in no degree attained. For it is always possible, that the external man perfectly commands the internal, and perverts or silences it; and then there may be the semblance of peace. But when this is not the case, then between the internal and the external there must needs be conflict until one controls the other. If the internal prevails, the man is saved and the peace of heaven comes down. If the external prevails, the man is lost, and goes down into whatever of repose there may be in that condition which is the opposite of heaven.

That the character of the man, here and hereafter, depends upon the question whether the internal has subjected, or has

been subdued by, the external, is an universal law. Like every other universal law it is easily seen and comprehended in its lowest applications and effects; but, if we trace it upwards, it hides its head in clouds; because far above us it operates upon forms and modes of life of which we have little comprehension, and mingles with other laws of life, which by their ascent have become invisible. Thus, when a man is strongly moved by a love of external show or enjoyment, and selfishly desires and labors to be rich, or honored, or powerful, or splendid and admired, or to indulge in some sensual pleasure, — if he be not altogether lost, he will find some feeling which he knows to be better than those which urge him on, and it speaks as from the depths of his consciousness, and rebukes those wrongful desires. All philosophy and metaphysics may be unknown or forgotten, but the man knows, and knows by intuition if he has not suppressed his intuition, that the motive, affection or lust which lead him to this outward pleasure, all belong to his outer nature; while the principle, or the better feeling, which warns him and holds him, belongs to his inner nature. He may give to which he will the victory; but he must give it to one. If he permits the outer nature to be triumphant, it will afterwards be the stronger for this victory, and the good within will be weaker, and its voice will be less certain and less strong, and he will be less able and less willing to hear it, although that voice be not wholly silenced. If the inner and better nature conquers, that grows stronger, and the man grows better and wiser, and more able to resist similar or farther temptations when they come.

Come they must; for he has taken only the first step in a path which he must follow far onward. And every step will be like unto the first. Every step, if it be forwards, will be taken by permitting the inner to overcome the outer. This is Regeneration. For as the inner overcomes the outer, it cleanses and elevates the outer, and makes it one with itself.

We have said that it is no part of the inner to destroy the outer, for it seeks to give to it a true life. Hence, with the regenerate man, and with the angel, and the highest angel, self-love and the sensuous nature may continue for ever to be vivid and powerful. But with the angel self-love has ceased to be supreme and therefore it has ceased to be selfishness; and the sensuous nature leads him not to sensuality. The reason is that these belong to his outer nature; and his inner nature has not only conquered them, but has made them its own external, its own instrument and embodiment. The regenerate man loves self, in his own selfhood, dearly, and provides for it most tenderly and carefully, and looks after its nourishment and repose, its recreation, enjoyment and invigoration. But because he loves his neighbor as himself, in all his love for himself his love for his neighbor is included. Therefore, his endeavor to give himself strength has for its end the continuance and enlargement of the uses he may perform by means of this invigorated self. He desires to be strong, healthy and happy, and is wise and watchful in all precautions for this purpose, because the more vigor he has the more useful he may be. So too, his sensuous nature is indulged and cultivated, but always within the bounds of innocence; for these limits are fixed by his inner nature; and his outer nature yields, for it has become more perfectly what it was originally intended to be, the instrument and servant of this inner nature.

We say that what is outermost is farthest from God; and what is inner is nearer to Him. The words inner and outer, near and far, higher and lower, refer originally to time and space, neither of which belongs to the soul or spirit of man. But we are obliged to use these words because we have no other; and from the correspondence between things of the spirit and things of the body, they express our meaning sufficiently well. We should not be troubled by a vain logic. To refer again to an illustration we have already used, he

who should say there could not be for the mind a *right rule*, because right meant only a right or straight line, as it certainly does primarily, and rule, only the straight edge of wood or metal by which to know whether a line was straight or not, — would be laughed at. For when we say “right” and “rule,” meaning a moral or mental right and rule, men know what we mean, whether they philosophize about it or not. So it is with the words outer and inner, far and near, higher and lower, as applied to spiritual things. Or so it will be, when it is usual to think of, or speak of, or care for spiritual things.

What is outermost is farthest from God. What is innermost is nearer to God. Here then we have the foundation of the universal law, that all spiritual progress consists in the subordination of the outer to the inner, in such a sense and such a way, that the inner makes the freest use of the outer, and the outer, in its own freedom, obeys the inner.

This law ascends to the very highest. From our low and dark point of view, we can follow it, even in imagination, but a very little way. We may however see that it leads even towards an absolute subordination of all that is not of God, to all that is of God; of all that is of God in its essence and origin but has become perverted and corrupted in its form, manifestation and effect, to all that is of God and unperverted; to an absolute infilling of all that is not divine with that which is; and to a perfect cleansing of all that is not divine, and by this cleansing, and in the degree of this cleansing, fitting this external to become the clothing, the habitation, the eternal and universal instrument, the living body, of that which is divine. And religion gives to this final and consummated state, the name of conjunction between the human and the divine; or, conjunction of man with God.

Because this is a universal law, it begins in the lowest forms of spiritual existence. If there is anything of good in man, so much of the divine is united to what is human. If

good grows in him, the conjunction of the divine with the human grows. For the human without the divine is, first, nothing; and then if the divine be received, but by the abuse of man's freedom is perverted, it becomes evil. This absolute conjunction of the human with the divine is the end which we approach from the first moment that we become better than we were. Unless we are lost, this approach will be eternal; and it will always measure our approach to all good, and to all happiness.

Because God is good, and is Love, it is the eternal end of his infinite providence to lead and help men along this pathway to himself. It may indeed be called the one end, and, because it unites all others, the only end of Divine Providence, to enable and induce man to do his share of this work.

God's own share is to come down to us, and fill the inmost of our being, and thence to come forth and forward from this inmost, to meet and welcome whatever there is in us which rises to approach Him. Of this *inmost* of our being, we are wholly unconscious; for consciousness belongs only to our *inner* and our *outer* being. He animates these also; but with a life duly tempered and qualified into fitness for us by the angelic or spiritual mediums through whom it flows. He does this in such wise as to provide with unutterable and inconceivable wisdom, exactly that degree of influence upon us which shall do all that can be done towards leading us in freedom to good, with nothing of that coercion which would destroy our freedom. For, as the work for man to do is to *choose* good rather than evil, to love good better than evil (and love, by its very nature, must be free), this work would be done in no sense and in no degree by man, if it were only the choice of God in man.

How this work of infinite wisdom and mercy is done for all for us, at every moment, we may not understand, not, at least, while it is going on. But after each providence, we may look

out from the clefts in the rock, wherein we may dwell, and see Him after He has passed by. But neither need we be blind to it, even at the time. For if we heartily try to do one good thing in the name of the Lord, or because he desires it, we shall even then feel and see that it is we who do it in our freedom, and yet that we so do it because he helps us.

Because there is this work for man to do in his freedom, he is free to leave it undone; and many leave it undone. And he is free to do it imperfectly; and all do it very imperfectly. But it remains nevertheless the constant end of the providence of God, that all may do it perfectly. To this end all his providences, whether operative in physical laws, or revealed as truths, or hidden far away from the recognition of men; whether universal or individual; all tend thither, and in it all unite, and always have united and always will.

The last and greatest providence of all, one towards which all that came before pointed, and to which all that has come or shall come hereafter, refers, one which moved and influenced all that is, from the centre of being to the outermost bounds of existence, was the coming of God down to this earth, in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And in His birth, and in His life, and in His death, and in all the works He did in the spirit-world even while living here, and in His Resurrection, we have the history of the great and universal endeavor of the Divine to come into absolute union with the human, and to facilitate forever the approach of all that is human towards conjunction with the divine.

In His life on earth, our Lord exhibited the externals of those acts He was then doing in the world of spirit. His external and visible work was the image and revelation of His internal and invisible work. The words He uttered were in their letter and external divine as well as human; for while He spake as a man, He spake as never man spake. But this letter was also the form and expression of higher divine truths, by which He works spiritual miracles that are as the

soul of the miracles He wrought here. Thus, because He was divine, His acts and words partook of His eternalness, and their force and meaning and influence are eternal and universal. And the works He then did among the spirits in the world where spirits live, which were shadowed forth and presented to our view by the works He did among men on earth, are similar works, for a similar end, to the works He is always endeavoring to do; and so far as man permits, always does, in and for the spirit of every man.

The Jews were a chosen people; but were not chosen for their excellence. They were selected to form the mere representative of a church. Their history represents the history of a church in man, or of divine truth in the mind. Their bondage, their deliverance, their wanderings in the desert, and their possession of the holy land, are all symbolic in this way. They were commanded to extirpate the nations who possessed that land; and the command represents the command to us to subdue and extirpate the idolatrous and sinful affections and thoughts which possess what should be *our* holy land. They were selected for this purpose, because their extreme and entire naturalness, or the absolute preponderance of the external and worldly nature in them (indicated by the fact that the religion given to them alone among the religions of mankind, makes little reference to another life) made it possible for them to be led without mischief through experiences which would have been injurious to others.

A woman of this nation was selected to be the mother of our Lord. A woman of the house of David the king; for he stood at the head of his nation, and was always regarded as its perpetual head. In his symbolic capacity, he represented Jehovah, the head of the living church, while in his own nature he was the embodiment of the Jewish characteristics. Therefore was Jesus the son of David in both senses.

His human was the last result of Jewish naturalness, and so He was the son of David; and He was also the son of David as the representative of Jehovah, for Jehovah was his only father. His father did not impart life to him through the qualifying medium of a human father. Jesus Christ was conceived, or Life came to the human mother, directly, without qualification or modification of any kind or measure.

In Jesus Christ were an internal nature and an external nature as in every man. But in Him, these were infinitely far apart. The external nature was full of the proclivities to evil which infest man. The internal nature was perfect and absolute goodness. Hence, there can never be in any man, so great an opposition between the external and the internal as there was in Him. The whole external was gradually brought forth into activity, and was wholly subdued and subordinated by the internal. This also can never happen in any man. In Jesus the external was human and the internal was divine; and when the internal had overcome and expelled from the human all the evil from the mother, or everything in the nature derived from her which belonged to it personally and individually by her act or by her inheritance, and had filled its place with its own divine good, the external became divine *as* the internal, and divine *with* the internal; and they became one God. This also can never happen with any man. As the whole external was thus brought into conflict with the internal and subdued and vivified by it, there was in that external all the suffering due to that infinite conflict; and this also was more than any man has suffered or can suffer.

We have enumerated these particulars, in which the example of Jesus cannot be followed by man; and yet it will be obvious, that while it cannot be followed to the same degree and extent, and with the same result, it may be followed, step by step, in every respect and every particular of every kind, by every man, but in an infinitely less degree; and is

and must be followed by every one who advances from evil towards good, because no other path leads in that direction. The glorification, or making divine of the humanity of Jesus Christ, was the doing perfectly, of that of which every good action is the partial and imperfect doing.

The question then occurs, in what way does this perfect example of what man should do, assist him in doing it. The very question suggests one answer to it. A perfect example is an ever-present standard, an everlasting lesson. But this, which is the most obvious answer to the question, is also the most external and the lowest.

There are other answers; one within, or above the other; bearing us upwards in their own ascending flight. This great mystery must forever remain one to created intellects. It is one with the great mystery of godliness. But it will be always better understood as man or angel follows in the path it points; and learns what was done by doing it; and learns why it was done by possessing the fruits of it. Thus it fills every mind that advances along that path, with light and hope and joy, and always promises from the inexhaustible wisdom which united with perfect love in that infinite act, more light, and always and forever, more light.

It was imperfectly understood by the early Christians; and soon settled into forms of doctrine which have remained to our own time; and these contain much truth, mingled with much that is not truth. One great want in the view taken of it by the first Christian church, arose from their ignorance of what our Lord was doing in the spiritual world, even while he was working visibly on earth. This want has been recently supplied in the revelations made for the new Christianity now in its beginning. And the information thus given is the key which may unlock this mystery, and open this new gate to heaven.

We are taught that all men are constantly under the influence — for good or for evil — of spirits; and that the life

which flows into us through them, in them is qualified into fitness for us, and becomes our own life. But that the divine Providence modifies, balances and equilibrates these influences in such wise, that every man is always able in his own freedom to rise, if he will, and strengthen the good that is in him, and this more and more continually.

We are further taught that at the coming of our Lord, man had fallen into a condition so debased and wretched, that all evil influences had undue power over him; a power too great for his freedom, and threatening to become absolute and inevitable. His state had become so entirely evil, that the balance was lost; and evil spirits not only infused thoughts and affections of evil, as they have ever done and will do, but were enabled to take bodily possession of men; and it seemed as if destruction was near, and there was none to help.

Then help came; sufficient, because it was Almighty; and came in such a form that its work might be perfect and permanent.

If the question be asked why did not God, from his throne in heaven, *will* at once the extinction of evil and the restoration of order, one answer is to point at the mingled good and evil everywhere, and say that this *proves* that he does not *so* resist and destroy evil. Another answer is, that God always works by means, and according to the laws of His own divine order; this is the universal law of His providence, and it was the law of this crowning and infinite providence.

God made man — makes man — by imparting to him His own life, and by giving to His life in man, human selfhood; and only by and in and through this selfhood does He ever or can He ever help any man; and only in and through this human nature could He give to the human race the very help that they needed; and therefore He, the Father, assumed this human nature, or this human selfhood, and the Son of God became the Son of Man, and stood and worked and suffered among men as one of them.

The Father came down to humanity in a new way; and because humanity had descended so low that it could fall no lower and live, the human nature he then assumed was full of all proclivities to all evil. And *in* this nature and these proclivities, he found the means of combatting all the evil influences which can infest humanity, because all were permitted to assail it in precisely the same way in which they assail our own human nature. This they did; and the conflict with them constituted the temptations, the inexpressible and inconceivable sufferings of our Lord. But as these evil spirits were conquered, and when all were conquered, all the hells were subdued and restored to their own proper order. Those who filled them, and those who have joined and may hereafter join them, live, and live without voluntarily doing good. They love to do evil; and only in their own loves can they live. Hence, they are not denied access to man; for his regeneration, his salvation and his happiness, depend upon his knowing, combatting and putting away his own evils, voluntarily and in free choice; and the tendencies to evil in men could not be filled and animated by life flowing through good spirits. The devils are permitted to live and do their proper work; and earth is full, and we are all full of the work they do. War, plague and famine, the great calamities which distress nations, the more particular mischiefs which fall on individuals, all disorder and all sin, are their work. But now they work forever under the limitation that what they do shall be balanced and equilibrated. However they may hereafter infest or tempt man, they can never more have power to prevent his resistance, or to stir up lusts and propensities which he *cannot* deny and overcome.

Thus was man Redeemed: thus was Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.

I looked and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation.

In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them. In His love and pity, He Redeemed them.

He has showed strength with his arm; He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as He spake to our Fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed, forever.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE SOJOURN OF OUR LORD IN EGYPT.

And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word : for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt. — MATT. ii. 13-15.

THE correspondence of the natural or external things mentioned in the Word with spiritual or internal things, — to which we have so often alluded and must so often allude, — is absolutely universal ; and it must therefore extend to the different countries there mentioned, and give to each its own significance.

The three countries most frequently mentioned are Egypt, Assyria (or Asher), and Judea (or Israel). What is the significance of each of these ?

There are three distinct and successive steps or degrees in intellectual progress. We may call them *knowledge*, *intelligence*, and *wisdom*. Or we may describe them (1) as the learning and knowing of truths of any kind ; (2) as the understanding of what is thus known ; and (3) the applying to the improvement of life and character, of what is known and understood ; and thus growing wise.

It is obvious that if nothing whatever is known, there cannot be even the beginning of intellectual progress. It is equally obvious, that whatever be the amount of our mere knowledge, if we understand nothing that we know, we know it in vain. And it is equally certain, although not equally

obvious, that whatever it may be that we know and understand, we are in fact none the better for it, and none the *wiser* for it, if we make and desire to make no application of it to the improvement of life and character.

In the Word, Egypt denotes the learning and knowing of truths, or the truths thus known. Asher denotes the reasoning faculties by which we understand what we know, or this understanding itself. And Judea (or Israel) denotes that wisdom which is founded upon knowing and understanding truth and applying it to life.

As we learn only by the exercise of the external or natural faculties, Egypt frequently denotes all of these faculties in the complex, or the merely natural man. So Judea (or Israel) represents and denotes a church, because a church in man's own soul is the result of knowing truths, — especially the truths of the Word, — and understanding them, and applying them to life; and a collective church is formed from the union of those in whom this condition prevails.

All progress, intellectual or moral, must begin with learning and knowing; and this is what is represented by Egypt, and going down into Egypt.

Abraham, as the father and founder of a church, represented and prefigured our Lord. When seventy and five years of age, but at the beginning of his spiritual life, the Lord called him, to go out from his country, his kindred, and his father's house, that is, from all he was by birth and nature, unto a land which God should show him. And he journeyed "going on still towards the south. And there was a famine in the land; and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there." And after a while, he "went up out of Egypt."

So Jacob, another father of the Jews, and another and different antetype of the Lord, was driven by famine into Egypt. He did not return during his life, but required of his children that they should "carry him out of Egypt, and bury him with his fathers."

Joseph was another and a very different antetype of our Lord; and his whole story in its spiritual sense is a perfectly connected, consistent, and most wonderful relation of our Lord's spiritual life while on earth, and of His spiritual life in the mind of every man in whom He dwells. Joseph said to his brethren, that God would surely visit them, and bring them up out of Egypt to Canaan, and that they should carry up his bones from Egypt.

So too our Lord went down into Egypt, and there sojourned a while. For His human nature was subject to all the laws and necessities of our own. He was initiated into knowledges, and especially into knowledges of the Word, and passed, step by step, there where we may pass, and must pass, if we would follow Him. And this is what is meant by His going down into Egypt.

It is not said that the child Jesus was driven into Egypt by a famine, but by the fear of Herod, who sought to kill Him. The meaning is substantially the same. The famine, from which they are saved who go down into Egypt, is a famine for the truth; for the knowledge of what is good is the food of the mind, and the knowledge of what is true is its drink. It is, as said by the prophet, "a famine, not of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." And because this is what famine corresponds to and signifies, it is mentioned so perpetually when the declining state of the Jewish Church is referred to.

Herod, the king of the Jews, impersonated, as it were, and represented, in that passage and in all others, the whole nature and genius of Judaism; and not as it existed in that people and in that age only, but as it exists in all men at all times. It is perfectly opposed to internal and spiritual life; and when this spiritual life dawns in the mind, hates it and fears it and is anxious to slay it, even as was Herod. But it cannot do this, if the growing goodness is nourished and protected by knowledges of God's truth derived from His Word. For

then the infantile goodness goes down into Egypt, and is fed there, and is safe from the hostility of Herod.

Our Lord passed through all the steps which we must pass through ; but with a more perfect result, not only at the end, but at the beginning, and on the way. He grew in knowledge and in wisdom, as no other can ; and He needed so to grow, that He might be protected from dangers and infestations which can assail no man, nor be endured by man alone.

Thus it is not only said generally, that He increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men ; but it is specifically stated, that he was not in youth as others are ; for "all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding."

Even at that early age, He knew who His Father was, and what work was given Him to do. "I must be about my Father's business." And every genuine spiritual emotion in the mind, however immature it may be, is apt to recognize its own Divine origin, so far at least as to see that it comes down from above as the gift of infinite mercy to our poor, humble and perishing nature, and comes with a demand that we should hate our own natural lives, if we would do our Father's will, and receive a new life from Him.

Let us see, however, what more is said of Egypt, Asher and Judea ; and what instruction is given under these symbols.

Every human faculty and every gift of God to man is given *to his freedom*, and therefore may be abused and perverted. Nothing may be learned but falsity. Nothing may be understood except in a way to favor and confirm falsities. And nothing but these falsities so understood may be applied to life.

Hence Egypt, Asher, and Judea, and almost every other of the most important words of Scripture, denote and signify in some places things which are perfectly opposite to what they denote and signify in others. Which of the two they denote

may be known — for the most part easily — by the context and subject-matter.

The difficulty may here present itself, that the acquisition of knowledge begins when the babe first opens its eyes; and upon the increase of knowledge depends our intellectual growth; and with the unending capacity of perpetual increase of knowledge, the possibility of eternal happiness is closely connected. How then can knowledge and the pursuit of knowledge be mischievous? So, our reasoning faculties distinguish us intellectually from brutes; and it is the use of these faculties which gives to us all the intelligence we can have. How then can these very faculties lead to darkness and desolation?

Egypt, as the representative and symbol of knowledge, and Assyria (or Asher), as the representative and symbol of reasoning, are very frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, — especially in the prophets, — in two precisely different and opposite ways; at one time, with a reprobation which amounts to a curse, and with almost fierce denunciation and threat of woe and utter desolation; at another with every promise of blessing. All this is explained by the science of correspondence. Such passages, read in its light, illustrate the laws and conditions of progress in wisdom and happiness, and the perils of darkness and spiritual death which are always very near us.

All truths which it is possible to know, all indeed which exist, necessarily relate either to things of the spirit, or to things of the body, for of these two things all that has ever existed or ever can exist, consist.

These two classes of truths stand in a definite relation to each other. And the knowledge and understanding of each of them is necessary for a just and wise understanding of the other. To those who have not yet reflected on the subject, it might seem to be a matter of indifference, or at most of mere taste and convenience, which of these two an inquirer

begins with and from it passes to the other. But while the truths one learns by sense and sensuous thought must be first in the order of time, spiritual truths, or truths relating to the spirit, or truths transcending space and time, — we may use which phrase we please, — must be held as prior in degree and value, and to them all lower truths and knowledges should be subordinate and instrumental.

The soul is more than the body. The body is for the sake of the soul. The vital power of the soul forms the body, and makes it to be alive, and to live as its instrument. So it is with the relation of spirit to matter on the largest or the universal scale. It is for the sake of the world of spirit, and as its instrument, that the material world exists. Spiritual life, and all things of the spirit, and all truths relating to the spirit, come down to man from above. Therefore man cannot see them without looking upwards.

The spirit, and not the body, sees and knows; but to see and know things of the body, or of the outer world, the spirit looks down and outward through the senses of the body. If then the mind, looking down and outward through the senses and sensuous thought, sees and knows the things and truths which belong to the body and its world, and then seeks after the things and truths of the spirit by looking still further in the same direction, it can never find them; and it can never find anything but falsity and darkness, denial and desolation.

The mind cannot see God, except by looking upward; it can receive no spiritual truths except by receiving them from above, and can receive none from above without acknowledging them as coming from above. The senses of men, and thought founded upon the senses, let them reach any imaginable point of cultivation, are always utterly unable, of themselves, even to *suggest* the first or slightest truth concerning God or the spirit. And the reason why no men in any age are wholly without such truths or thoughts, is, that

from the beginning the mercy of the Lord has in some way revealed something of Himself and of the spirit-world, and has always preserved this knowledge from utter extinction, because, if there were such extinction, mankind would perish.

The senses and sensuous thought can discover nothing whatever of truth concerning God and the spirit. The merely natural understanding, be its power, its acquisitions or its cultivation what they may, so long as pride in its own sufficiency blinds it, *can* see only natural truth, and *must* deny all supernatural truth, and desire to expel it from what one may still call his religion, or even his Christianity. But if a man accepts religious truths from above (from the Word of God, from religious instruction, or the teachings and impressions of his childhood, or any of the sources by which God gives this truth to him), and is willing to say, this is not my own discovery, made by my own strength, he may bring it down into nature and natural science, and find for it nourishment, confirmation, unending development growth and fruitfulness, in the illustration which things of the senses and of sensuous thought cast upon it. And that it may effect this very purpose, and do this great good, the outer world, which we lay hold of with our senses, and investigate and understand by sensuous thought, is constructed as the clothing and the outgrowth, the manifestation and the symbol, of the inner world.

As this is an universal truth, it is true in all the degrees or upon all the planes of thought. Hence, one who begins in simplicity with the religious truth he reads in the Scriptures, and honestly accepts this, will find constant confirmation and illustration of it in all the knowledge he acquires of the outer world or by the experiences of life, and so will grow wiser. And the wiser a man grows, or the higher he ascends towards the origin of truth, the more truth he will receive from the Divine revelations, and the more confirmation and

illustration of this truth will he derive from below. To this progress there can be no end. The more he learns of the spiritual treasures which lie interiorly in the Word, and which come to him from its letter and by just reasoning from spiritual truth concerning the letter and its significance, the more he will find all he thus learns confirmed and illustrated by the wonderful forms and forces and laws of the material world, as they open before him.

The opposite course presents a melancholy picture. Beginning with the science of nature as a starting point, and endeavoring by this, and in one's own strength, to penetrate the mysteries of the spirit; beginning with utter ignorance and denial of spiritual truth, unless the mind can prove it through sensuous thought or merely natural ratiocination and then claim it as its own work; beginning with a firm grasp of natural and external truth, and an habitual contemplation of it and devotion to it, and a trust in one's own self-intelligence which makes it the standard for spiritual truth, and excludes all spiritual truth which is not its fruit, — then every step will be downward; and by all increase of knowledge which is so used, the ignorance of spiritual truth will be deepened, and the denial of it made more absolute; — more absolute in fact, although it may be able to refine and dilute matter until it is called spirit, or some other form or disguise of denial is put on.

Egypt representing knowledges or scientifics of all kinds, true or false, and Assyria representing reasoning from them or concerning them, a very large class of the passages of Scripture concerning Egypt and Assyria relate to this dangerous and destructive inversion of the true order of thought. No wonder that they paint, as distinctly as words can, scenes of woe and darkness and death.

The nineteenth chapter of Isaiah begins, "The burden of Egypt." Then it goes on with the most vivid description — when made significant by correspondence — of the effect upon

the mind, of merely natural knowledge and natural reasoning, and the pursuit of that knowledge, and trust in that knowledge, — if the starting point and the constant guide be not an acknowledgment of God's own Word. But at the close, the picture is reversed. "That day" is now described in which "there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt." Then is this knowledge consecrated, and then salvation and blessedness are promised. Through all these passages it must be noticed, that it is not a mere poetical analogy or figure, but an actual correspondence which is true in all its details and particulars; and so, where it is said in this chapter, that "the waters shall fail from the sea" and "the river shall be wasted and dried up," and "the brooks of defence shall be wasted and dried up," and "the reeds and flags shall wither," and "the fishers shall mourn — and lament — and languish" (water being — as all who have any knowledge of the laws of correspondence are aware — the most general symbol or representative of truth), these are not mere instances of "oriental imagery," but a presentation of details, all with their special significance, and all together making up the general statement; the key to which is, that all knowledge, which is neither understood aright nor applied aright to life and conduct, must itself perish from the mind, if not in this world, then inevitably in the other.

So horses always represent and signify, as has been said and illustrated in another place, that faculty by which we advance in the ways of truth or of falsity; and chariots, in which the horses bear along the riders, have a similar though still a different signification; and the woes repeatedly pronounced on those who trust in them are in fact pronounced on those who trust in their own strength of intellect, with no sincere and reverent recognition of God, and His Word, and the need of His help. Thus in the thirty-first chapter of Isaiah, "Woe unto them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses and trust in chariots, because they are many,

and in horsemen because they are very strong; but they look not unto the God of Israel, neither seek the Lord. . . . The Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses *flesh, and not spirit* (or merely natural, and not spiritual). . . . Then shall the Assyrian fall with the sword (or the misused faculty of reasoning will perish), . . . he shall flee from the sword, and his young men shall be discomfited."

In the second chapter of Jeremiah, "Is Israel a servant, is he spoiled? . . . They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that hold no water. . . . Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way. What hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?" Where waters, as elsewhere, signify primarily truths, but in their perversion, falsities. And in the seventh chapter of Hosea, "Ephraim is like a silly dove; they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria. . . . Woe unto them! for they have fled from me; destruction unto them!"

Commentators upon Scripture have sometimes explained these passages, or such parts of them as they can, by referring them to the efforts of Israel to seek the assistance of Egypt in their wars. The historical facts on which this explanation rests are doubtful; but there is probably some truth in them. For throughout the history of the children of Israel, they were so led as often to illustrate *by facts* the significance and symbolism of Scripture.

There is, however, another side of this picture; one for which it is difficult even to attempt any explanation other than the perfect explanation given by the laws of correspondence. To understand this picture we must remember that the mercy of God never fails, never wearies, never despairs. Whatever may be the delays or obstructions interposed by that freedom of man which that mercy always preserves as

the foundation of all its gifts, that mercy will one day be triumphant; and is triumphant every day in him who turns from his evil and mistaken ways that he may live. "In that day shall there be an highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance."

This is a living portraiture of a mind already knowing, intelligent, and wise, and advancing in a way of wisdom which shall have no end. For "in that day" of the mind a way is opened from Egypt to Assyria, so that nothing can be learned and no addition made to knowledge already possessed, which does not become at once material for just reasoning. And "the Assyrian shall come into Egypt;" for all such reasoning upon acquired knowledge returns again to Egypt, for further increase and discovery of knowledge. And "Israel is a blessing in the midst of the land;" for religious and spiritual truth is honestly and fervently held and reverently acknowledged as the *centre and source* of all wisdom, and the guide of all reasoning; and finds in the whole expanse of creation constant increase of knowledge, and in all reason constant confirmation and illustration.

It is not enough that "we go down into Egypt," or that we acquire knowledges of spiritual and religious truths. The question is, what do we with them? If we reason about them in the pride of our own intelligence; if we say of God's Word, or, without saying it, if we think, that we are wiser than it is, and will take what seems to us true, and call the rest mistaken, we may think ourselves wise and make some others think so; but we "have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewed out for ourselves broken cisterns

that hold no water;" and all the woes and desolations threatened against Egypt and Assyria will rest upon us.

REMAINS.

In this chapter I speak of the childhood of our Lord; and in this connection better perhaps than elsewhere, I may refer to an important doctrine of the New Church. It is called by us the doctrine of Remains; for by this word we translate Swedenborg's Latin word, *Reliquiæ*. It is founded on the truth, now universally admitted, of the indestructible permanence of all thoughts and feelings, of all states of the understanding or of the will. They may pass from the memory, or rather so far down into the depths of the memory, that they are beyond our power of recall. But there they are. Swedenborg founds on this law of our nature, his views of the unspeakable importance of childhood. Whatever impressions are then made, *remain*, and are forms which may be filled, or rather living seeds which may be made to germinate by later influences. And these remains thus formed in childhood are the instruments by which the regeneration, the salvation of man, is wrought, after he has attained the freedom of maturity.

To some extent the question what impressions shall be made upon the childlike mind and heart is submitted to the action and determination of those about the child. But there are other and higher influences at work, and all are overruled, guided and provided for all children. All begin conscious life in utter weakness and dependence; and the impression thus made can be revived when it can be filled with a sense of dependence upon God, of trust in Him, of confidence in His care and love. All children—it may be hoped that all—experience more or less of kindness and affection from their companions and their elders; and when the sense of gratitude and love once lives within them, it never dies however it may slumber.

It is the universal law of human life, that the child begins to live in a relation to its parents or to those who stand in the place of parents, which causes in its earliest consciousness, a sense that from them come all things whatever. The child turns to them for food, for care, for solace if in distress, for all that its infantile wishes or needs require. This, I repeat, is an universal law; for so it is provided of divine mercy, because all of these impressions combine to form what may be called a vessel of the mind, into which may be poured in later life, correspondent feeling in relation to the father and the mother of the soul; to our Father in heaven; to the church which He has formed to feed us with the bread of life, to clothe our minds with the raiment of truth, to take us by the hand when we begin to tread with faltering footsteps the path of life, to care for us in all peril, to take us to its arms in all distress. This is the work which He desires may be done by every church which He establishes. And He desires that every mother should do a correspondent work for her child, that the higher work of the spiritual mother may also be done.

And then all the thoughts, affections, words, acts, all impressions and states, whether intellectual or affectional, which we experience in this life, REMAIN. Not one is lost or ever can be. And when we pass into the other life, infinite love guided by infinite wisdom, calls up from unconsciousness, all of those states which can be made the means of improving our characters and advancing our happiness. We go into the other world, filled with possibilities, with living germs of intellect or affection. We live here that we may become filled with them. And what we are there, whether happy, or in what way or degree happy, must depend upon the actualities into which these possibilities may be developed; upon the fruits which those plants may yield into which the living germs we bear with us may grow.

CHAPTER V.

OF OUR LORD'S TEMPTATIONS IN THE WILDERNESS.

1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungered.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them,

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.—*MATT. iv. 1-11.*

WHILE the waters of baptism were poured over the head of Jesus, he heard the voice of His Father; and from this Jordan he passed at once into the wilderness, and there he heard the voice of the Devil, tempting Him.

There are many kinds of temptation; and the word is used, or may be used, in many senses. Ordinarily, it means a disposition of the mind or an influence upon it to do a wrong thing. This is its lower form.

Within or above this, are those states in which one is moved not so much to do, as to think and feel and be, that which he should not. Something of this meaning every one knows; if, for example, a man says that when he sees the success and prosperity of the wicked, he is *tempted* to renounce all belief in the government of God, everybody understands him. But there is still a higher class of temptations, of which much less is known, and of which it is much more difficult to speak. They are what is generally meant by "temptations," in the writings of the New Church although elsewhere they are, if known to exist, not now generally called by that name.

They may be defined as internal conflicts. They seem to be, and they actually are, conflicts between good and evil in the mind. That is, conflicts between the good that is there and the evil that is there; or between the internal and the external; or between those good spirits through whom all good thought, feeling and life come to us, and those evil spirits through whom all evil life comes to us. They are actual combats for the mastery; these combats take place within the man's own soul and they are for dominion over the soul; and the end of them must be the victory of one or other of the parties combatant.

They may or they may not take the form of a prompting to do or to be what a better influence forbids. They may be felt only as internal distress. They may bring a consciousness of unrest and suffering and of the evil from which all suffering comes. This may go on, even to the extremest anxiety, to intolerable woe, to despair; but let there be resistance still, and when the darkness is thickest it will break, and a new day will come; for it is in that very combat that

the Lord is very near. The man himself may or may not be able to define precisely the evil which rose up and claimed dominion and inflicted suffering and threatened death; or the good which rebuked and overcame this evil. But of the conflict, of its misery, of the victory of the right and the consequent peace, he is as certain as he is of darkness when midnight fills the sky, or of light when the morning breaks.

Scarcely any subject is more dwelt upon in the works of Swedenborg, or presented with greater fulness and variety of illustration, or declared to be more important, than that of temptations. He shows that the Bible is full of it; the psalms in particular, being little else from their beginning to their end, in their spiritual sense, than narratives and statements of temptation — combats of some kind, and in some part or stage of spiritual progress. They are called the psalms of David: they describe generally the sorrows and conflicts of David; his fears and distress and despair; the hope that sometimes overcame fear; and sometimes the joy of victory and peace. David was a representative of our Lord, and the psalms of David, in their spiritual sense, portray the temptations, and combats in temptation, and victory over evil, of our Lord.

Swedenborg tells us, that temptations of some kind or measure are absolutely indispensable to all progress in regeneration, or in other words, to salvation. If we would understand the reason and the universality of this law, and the manner in which the purposes of God with man are worked out by means of temptations, we must remember why man lives. For, in proportion as we see clearly the end of all divine Providence, we may better understand the means used by Providence.

Because God is Love, it is certain that he made man from love, and therefore from a desire to make a world of happy beings. Because God is perfectly happy, there can be no happiness which does not enter into and belong to the happi-

ness of God. He created man, therefore, for the purpose of having a being to whom he could impart a measure of his own happiness.

The infinite and perfect happiness of God comes from the infinite and constant exercise of his love through his wisdom, in the form of his power. He desires to make beings who should love, and be wise, and should be happy because they could have power to exercise and indulge their love, according to their wisdom.

In the highest heaven, this object is attained in a degree wholly inconceivable by us. In the lower heavens, in a less degree. On earth still less; and in the hells less than on earth; but wherever men are, it is attained in some degree. Even in the animal world it exists also. The microscopic monad, which moves busily with its fellows in its drop of water, has some affection or desire or purpose, because the infinite love of God fills it according to its humble form and capacity; and it has some thought, for the divine wisdom is also there; and it is happy, because through that modicum of thought, it works out its little wish. And through the whole animal world the same thing is true; but, as we ascend the scale, in a much greater degree.

Man was made for more than this. He was created that there might be a being upon whose possibility of happiness infinite love might expend itself; and to this end, five things were given him of God and from God, and from the very substance of God.

The first of these is Personality. It is not given to man to suppose himself a person by a merciful illusion; but to be, and to know that he is a person; and to know also if he follows the light upwards, that his personality is derived from the divine personality, and is most real and indestructible.

The second is Love, and the third is Wisdom. God does not make man loving or wise by merely willing that he should be so. But he gives man a will and an understanding; and

the will is a spiritual organ or vessel, formed and adapted to receive into itself the divine love and convert that into its own love. And the understanding is an organ or vessel which receives the divine wisdom and converts it into its own thought. And everything in man of affection, feeling, motive or desire, is the love of God received in him, and modified or perverted by his nature. And everything of thought, belief, design or opinion in man, is God's own wisdom in him, and made to be his, and such as it becomes by being his.

The fourth gift of God is Power ; also from Himself. For His power is the operation of His love through His wisdom, and He gives to man the faculty of making His love, by means of His thoughts, active and productive of such things as are its proper fruits.

The helpless babe seems to have little of these ; but all are there ; and the highest archangel was once a babe, and then had in him the love and wisdom and power he now possesses, but not then known, developed and active, except in the slight motions of infantile happiness of that germ of being.

And the fifth element of the divine life in man is Freedom.

God himself is Free ; perfectly Free. He always acts in conformity with the laws of divine order ; for these are but the result and expression of divine wisdom ; and the divine love acts always by and through the divine wisdom, and the divine love and wisdom are perfectly conjoined. If He were not free, He could have no power ; or if He had power, would have but a qualified happiness in the exercise of His power. His freedom is the foundation of His own happiness, and He grants it to men, that it may be the foundation of their happiness. His freedom is an essential element of His own life, and with and in that life it comes to man. We may perplex ourselves in dark inquiries about this freedom ; but we know that we possess it. He gives it to us, because

He gives everything in such wise, through such means, and with such relations of balance and equilibrium, that He can impart to us all and always, not an illusive consciousness of freedom, but the fact; and, if we do not suffer ourselves to be bewildered, the certainty of the fact.

The general reason of this, — that He seeks to give us of his own happiness, and as that is founded upon freedom, He gives us freedom as the foundation of our own, — has been already stated. More particular reasons may be stated. His desire is that we may love what he loves, because we shall then be wise with his wisdom, and live of his life but as ourselves, without perverting his life in ourselves. But freedom is of the essence of love. Where there is compulsion, and in the same degree, there is an absence of choice, and of love. We cannot choose anything unless we may choose *not* that thing; we cannot love, unless we may also hate. A freedom, which for any reason *must* result in one conclusion, is not freedom.

We may advert, in passing, to the common difficulty of reconciling the foreknowledge of God with the freedom of man, on the ground, that if He absolutely foreknows any result without the possibility of error, that *must* take place, and man has no freedom. The answer is this. First, we feel and know our freedom. Then, if we go into metaphysics and philosophy and find this difficulty, let us go farther, and find the answer. For it is now conceded by all philosophy, that *time* is only a law or necessity of our thought or a manner of our perception, and not an entity, or a thing which has actual existence in itself. It belongs therefore to man, and not to God. Consequently we cannot say with any accuracy, that God *foresees*; because if there is no before nor after to him, or if before the infinite eternity of his wisdom, all things stand as one present thing, there is no more conflict between His perception and our freedom, than there is between the freedom of a child at play and the watchful regard of a father who looks on and sees it all, but is careful to leave

the freedom unimpaired. Thus, if metaphysics and philosophy tell us that our freedom cannot be reconciled with divine foreknowledge, we answer that God has no foreknowledge in any sense in which this argument uses this word. But can we comprehend how with God the past, present, and future are one? Most certainly not. We have not and cannot possibly have any just comprehension of an infinite mode of thought, and for this reason we say that an argument founded upon the supposed identity between infinite perception and finite thought must be irrational and must lead to a false conclusion. Let us then not go into metaphysics; or if we do go, not go only so far as to find an error, and stop there, when the next step might show that it is an error.

We say then that man has freedom; and we mean that he is always at liberty to choose the good or the evil. "*Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve,*" is the command of every day; and it is a command which none can disobey or evade. Every man, every day of his life, *chooses* to whom he will give the service of that day. And some choose good and some choose evil, and always have so chosen, and always will.

Therefore human nature became other than that which it was intended to be; it became an obstructed and perverting recipient of the divine life. But the love of God did not change; nor did his wisdom. It continued to be his desire and the end of all His providence, that man should receive from Him life and happiness; and therefore his freedom must be preserved if possible, and yet he must be led if possible back to his Father. He must therefore know in what direction he is going; he must know the evil that is in him, that he may voluntarily resist and overcome that evil. And temptations are permitted, because by their means man is taught what his nature is. It is they which bring to the man a knowledge of his own evils, or a knowledge that he is evil; they bring to him a deep sense of the misery these evils cause; they shake and weaken his love for the world,

and his false and foolish estimate of the pleasures of the world, of sense and of self-love ; they silence the accursed cry of the devils who throng his heart, long enough for him to hear a better voice, and to know that there is a better voice. And in these ways, and in a thousand others which it would be impossible to exhibit, they may weaken the evil and strengthen the good that may be in the man. By and in temptations, good influences lead and bend and guide man, but they never coerce him to be good ; for in temptations of any kind, the evil may conquer and the man be, if not slain, yet wounded.

While this process is going on, there is an apparent absence of all freedom ; and instead of it a sense of intolerable oppression. But there is within all this, even then, internal freedom. Man is never more free, than when *he forces himself* to do or be what is right. And after the temptation has passed away, — if it has ended in the victory of the good, — there is a new sense of freedom, and of happy and exultant freedom.

These temptations are always such, by the tender overruling of providence, as the man, at the moment, needs, and can bear. Slight, external, only some outside fear or calamity, — or internal, and felt like a wringing convulsion of the soul. Few, says Swedenborg, in these days, know what temptations, in the higher sense are. But because none are beyond the mercy of God, none escape wholly the permitted discipline, which is always such that it may do all that can then be done.

Our Lord was tempted even as we are tempted ; for to this his human nature was exposed precisely as our human nature is exposed. But because he *could* bear all temptations that could occur, all came ; all were borne ; and in all of them, good within conquered, until the evil without was perfectly subdued and removed ; and there was nothing left as a hindrance to perfect conjunction into absolute unity of the

human and the divine in our Lord; this conjunction may take place even in man, in a similar way, and by similar means, but never absolutely, and never more than in a finite, qualified and imperfect manner.

Some of the reasons which led the divine Love and Wisdom to this result, we may see. One is the perfect, eternal and universal example thus given to all men, forever. Another is that divine-human experience of our Lord and Saviour, which brings us so much nearer to Him; which gives to Him new means of saving us and approaching us, if on no other ground than because it warms our faith, our love, our hope, in all extremities and all sufferings, to know that He has been where we now are, has suffered as we now suffer, and has heard the approaching footsteps of despair, even as we now hear them; and that He from His own divine-human experience, now looks down on us with infinite love.

We may indeed find reasons for this mode and manifestation of the divine mercy, even in that infinite and inexhaustible love, which, if we go down into hell, we shall meet there also.

Evil men do all they can to lessen their own freedom; they cannot destroy it while they live on earth; but when they are in hell, it has gone and can return no more. It is no longer possible for them to have the true and high happiness of freely loving good and doing good. But it is possible for them to have a false and low enjoyment, which they value more, because it is all they can value. And even this the Lord cares for and cultivates, and tenderly guards from their own assault and destruction. They may think what is false, and love what is evil, and as far as is permitted, do what is evil. But they are mediums through which an adapted life flows to evil men, and through which the life that flows to good men is adapted to the evil that is in them. Without these evil spirits, there could be no such adaptation. Men who are predominantly evil would perish, would be wholly deprived

of and void of life, were not a life which they could receive supplied to them through these mediums. Good men could not know, and could not by resistance put away, their evils, if these were not animated and brought into consciousness by a life from those evil spirits. Therefore those spirits have their own activity and life in doing that which, under the divine providence, and guarded, limited and qualified, by that providence, may be instrumental in preserving others from becoming what they are. But all bad men live from receiving inflowing life from bad spirits, and the more numerous they are and the worse they are, the more abundant and the stronger is this life of bad spirits; and at the coming of our Lord, the accumulation of evil in the world had so filled and invigorated the realms of woe, and so weakened mankind, that evil spirits had become rampant and unchecked, to the great peril of man; and also to their own great detriment and suffering, because the more they can be restrained within their own order, the more free they are from suffering and the more enjoyment they have.

Then our Lord assumed humanity, not to redeem the devils, for that was impossible, because they would not be redeemed; but to redeem man, and to relieve even them who were making man and themselves too, wretched. For this purpose, He did not by a word of power destroy them or enchain them. He could not permit them to assail with their full force, any man that lived, for it would have crushed him and swept him away, and the man would have become a devil and the devils made worse. But he assumed a humanity which they could approach, and assault; and which they, all of them, from the unfastened abysses of hell, were permitted to approach and assail, with all their might. Well might we say with Milton, "Ill wast thou shrouded then, O patient son of God," did we not remember that they were met by a power greater than their own. They were subdued, without being destroyed. They were taught all they

could be made to see and to know. They were reduced to the best order in which they could be made to live, and therefore to the least suffering and the most enjoyment compatible with their ineradicable love of evil. They were relieved by being delivered from themselves, while man was Redeemed, by being delivered from them.

The Temptations of our Lord were continued during the whole of his life on earth. But little is said of them in the Gospels. The last, in Gethsemane and on the cross is distinctly spoken of; and all others are symbolically described and as it were contained in those endured in the forty days in the wilderness. These stand for the three classes which include all possible temptations.

He was an hungered, and the tempter said, "If thou be the Son of God command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

He was an hungered; his hunger was of the spirit; he was famished for lack of that truth which nourishes the soul. Around him were only stones. We have repeatedly noticed the fact, that all things must correspond and refer to either good or truth, or what is of the will and what is of the understanding, because these two make up the soul, and the man. Hence a kind of duality or twofold relation pervades the universe. One instance of this is the relation of all that part of the universe which is not organized and has no life, to that part of it which is organized and has life; for love is life, and truth without love is without life. The general reference of these inorganic matters is to things of the understanding; to truth or falsehood. The general reference of organic and living things is to things of the will, as good or evil affections, for these cause a good or bad life. Stones refer emphatically to things of the understanding; and this correspondence, which is constant throughout the Bible, is

sometimes quite obvious. In this sense our Lord is called the corner-stone, and it is said that the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; because faith in Him is the essential of all true doctrine and worship. So the perverted and desecrated temple was to be overthrown and not one stone left standing upon another; and this takes place when the fabric of false belief is thrown down and no one false doctrine left cohering with another. And when the Jews sought to stone Jesus because he made himself equal with the father, they did only what we do, when by the aid of falsehood and false reasoning we seek to put that truth to death in our own minds.

When one hungers for truth, his first and natural impulse is to seek it in his natural reason and natural knowledge, and extract nourishment for his mind out of the natural scientifics which he can lay his hand upon; the devil bids him command these stones to become bread, and satisfy his hunger; the devil bids him satisfy his longing for spiritual truth, by employing his merely natural faculties, about his natural knowledge; the devil bids him trust to the horses and chariots of Egypt and Assyria, and forget Zion; and then to believe that he feeds himself with food that he has made himself. But if his desire for truth is genuine, that is if its source be a love of goodness, he will soon learn that there is but one source of living truth, and that it is only "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," which can be bread to the soul. This may seem a simple matter, but it is a terribly hard lesson. Nor is it learnt until the abnegation of self-confidence is complete. In these days, a deadly worldliness both of affection and thought, and an invincible pride of self-intelligence and trust in self-capacity, seem to hold universal and almost undisputed sway; and therefore must the progress of truth be slow; slow, difficult, often arrested and sometimes perilous; often like the progress of an exploring bark through the ice-cumbered waters and by the barren shores of an arctic region.

Still this lesson may be learned, and many and very various and oft repeated are the methods of instruction by which providence would teach it. But then comes another lesson, equally necessary. "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city and setteth him upon a pinnacle of the temple. And saith unto him, If thou be the son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." If the abnegation of self-confidence be the first step, it leads naturally to a disposition to leave the whole work of salvation to God; and to a faith that he will do this work; and that we may incur what peril we will, and yet be safe. Hence that old doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, and other falsities of antinomianism, which have wrought so much mischief. We feel as if we had conquered, when we gave up the work into God's own hands; that we were lifted up by this self-denial far above the ordinary level of men, even to a pinnacle of the temple; and that we may throw ourselves down, into all the ways of life about us, or, if the falsity has full power over us, even into outward sin and pollution, but that He in whom we trust will still hold us in his hand and keep us in safety.

If our abnegation of self has been indeed from good and for good, we shall not be left in this error; but temptations and conflicts and discipline will come and abide with us, until we learn that we have none the less to do, because God does all; for the reason that he does all *through* us, that is, through our personality, our reason, and our freedom, as his living instruments. And then we learn, that while he indeed does all, he does nothing unless we co-operate with him; and that He has given us as our guide, His Law; given it to all; to the highest and to the lowest; to all, always; and that so far as we disregard this law and offend against it, so far His angels *cannot* save us. Without him, we should sink down until we

had sounded the immeasurable depths of evil, for our natural proclivity to sin is complete. But we are never without Him if we choose to be with Him, and every hour of every day we may labor conjointly with Him, in works which will always lead to a still more constant and abiding conjunction with Him.

And even this lesson may be learned; and then are we exposed to dangers greater than before. "Then the devil taketh him into an exceeding high mountain and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." We seem to ourselves now, not merely to have entered into the holy city, and to have stood there on a pinnacle of the temple, but to have climbed to the summit of an exceeding high mountain, higher than all the earth, far above all that belongs to the merely natural and worldly man, all whose kingdoms are spread out below us. And then if it is true that we do stand there, it is also true that the devil is with us there, tempting us to claim the glory, and to serve and worship and glorify self. None escape from this peril unscathed; none but the Sinless and Undefined ever did. All else do, at some time, thus worship the devils within them, and lay their own goodness on the altar of self, which is their altar. There is however one truth that will save us; one, that may lift us up and cleanse and strengthen us against self-worship, and help us to give to God the glory that is his. It is the truth which tells us, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve." And when this lesson also is learnt, the devil cannot but depart, and leave us at least for a season.

Throughout this narrative, the Devil is spoken of as a person. There is however no sovereign of hell, embodying all evil. And whenever the Devil is mentioned in the Word as one person, it signifies the hells collectively, or all the

devils; unless the context limits the sense, as when a devil who possesses a man is said to be driven out and the man cured.

Where the Devil and Satan are spoken of, the devil stands for the representation of all evil, and Satan for the representation of all that is false.

The temptations of our Lord are thus described in what purports to be a definite and detailed narrative of actual occurrences. But they were physically impossible. No one can stand on the top of any mountain and see all the surface of this globe. The Word narrates these facts as occurring in the life of our Lord on earth. And the interpretation of the Word which we are now taught, assures us that they did occur, most truly and most really, in their deeper meaning, and in His inner life while He was on earth.

Nor let it be forgotten, that to every temptation the answer was given, "It is written." And one thing which this parable — so I consider it — was intended to teach, is, that in every temptation, and in every peril of the soul, the Word of God will give us an answer and a sure defence. How many, now in heaven, can testify that it has been light, consolation, strength, in their direst needs.

And yet how many as they read it in this life, mourn that it gives them so often but an uncertain answer; mourn that it does not speak to them at that hour and in that want, more fully and more clearly. And therefore it is that infinite mercy has now given to His Word a new utterance; one, that as we learn to hear and understand it, may make us even while here, rejoice that our whole lives are wrapt in light and sunshine; in the sunshine which fills the heavens.

CHAPTER VI.

FREEDOM.

If ye continue in my word, . . . ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . . And the servant abideth not in the house forever; the son abideth ever. If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.—JOHN viii. 32–36.

THE doctrines and principles which relate to Freedom hold a most important place among those of the New Church. All men seek freedom, and all value it. But we shall be helped to seek it or value it aright, and understand its origin, its nature or its purpose, if we learn these from the new truths now revealed concerning the relations of God to man. In the pages immediately preceding, in treating of those elements of divine life which come to man, I have said somewhat of divine freedom, and of human freedom as derived from that. Let me now interrupt what might seem to be a more regular succession of topics, by considering more specifically, the subject of Freedom.

Because the outer world is the effect, the instrument and the manifestation of the inner world, upon almost all points it may instruct us as to the inner world; and upon few more than in regard to the Laws of Freedom.

Last and lowest of all things in the outer world is the mineral world; and in this there is no freedom, and little to suggest the thought of freedom. But even in the inorganic world, as we rise from rocks and metals to the water and the

air, we find no more of freedom in fact, but we find such semblance and suggestion of it as are implied in the common phrase, "Free as the wind and wave."

As we go still higher and reach the vegetable world, we find that which we call "life," and in the apparent power of selection and adaption to circumstances which plants possess, we find a still stronger semblance of freedom, although no power of voluntary self-determination.

But that we find, when we take the next ascending step, and come to animal life. Some of the lowest animals have, in some stages of their being, no power whatever of locomotion. But all, in the choice or in the reception of their food, and in the propagation of their kind, have some actual power of voluntary self-determination. It may be very feeble, and very narrowly limited. It may be strictly confined to those functions necessary to the continuance of life and the production of offspring. But there it is; so certainly, that the presence or absence of voluntary action is now regarded by eminent scientists as the best test to determine whether an organism be vegetable or animal; a question, which in regard to some of the protozoa, or first and simplest forms of organic life, is very difficult.

Having reached the animal kingdom, if we again ascend through its ranks, we find an ever increasing amount of this power of voluntary action; from the shellfish, through the reptiles, up to the eagle, the horse, the deer, the lion. And at each step we shall find that we associate the idea of vigor and completeness and enjoyment of life, with that of the greatest freedom, or the largest extent of the power of voluntary action and self-determination.

The next step leads us to man. He has less of this physical freedom than some of the animals; they can do many things which he cannot do; they can do many things *with the body alone*, which he cannot so do; but he has, and they have not, the faculty of making and using instruments;

and by the exercise of this faculty, he can enlarge his power of action and production, even as to external things; and not only far beyond them all together, but with a perpetual and never ceasing progress.

Or this gradation of freedom may be stated thus. All the elements of the material world seek crystallization; sometimes with great force, as is shown by the rending power of freezing water, or of water crystallizing into ice. But all these processes are subject to rigorous and exact rules which are reduced by scientific men into a science. Here is not even the semblance of freedom. But plants have this semblance. They have power to grow, to pass through different stages of being, and to accommodate themselves in some degree to circumstances. But they have no power of changing their place. Animals (all but a few of the lowest) have, in addition to vegetable life, the power of changing place at will; and seeking food and the means of enjoyment. But animals have not a particle of power of changing their own nature, or character or qualities. Men have vegetable and animal life and faculty; and in addition thereto, *power to change their character and qualities*. And as animals exert their power of changing place, in search of food or of the means of enjoyment, so men, in proportion as they are instructed and wise and more truly human, exert their power of changing their character and qualities, in search of food for the life within, and of true, abiding happiness.

If we pause here, to learn the first lesson we may derive from these facts, it is that our Creator has brought into existence creatures of all kinds, has given to them different degrees of freedom, and, to all appearance, different degrees of enjoyment responsive to their different degrees of freedom. But we may learn more than this. If the higher animals have, on the whole, more freedom, or a larger power and wider scope of voluntary activity, and therewith a larger capacity for enjoyment, we may well believe that He gives to

them this more of freedom that they may have this more of happiness. The oyster can sustain his life and propagate his kind as well as the bird or the mammal; and if only this were wanted, it was not necessary that animals should exist with larger powers than the oyster possesses. But more was needed. He who created all loves all, and desires to impart the largest happiness; and as he builds up His creation, places on its higher steps, those who have more freedom and more happiness, and who have more freedom that they may have more happiness, and more happiness because they have more freedom.

And so again we come to man. For him, and him alone, there is immortality, and indefinite unceasing growth and development. And through this eternal being and eternal growth, the same law prevails; the same law, for it is inevitable and universal. It is the eternal and infinite effort of Providence to enlarge man's freedom, that his happiness may be enlarged; and as his freedom grows, so grows his happiness.

But human freedom is not only larger in measure than animal freedom, but higher in degree and in kind; for to man, an absolutely new and other kind of freedom is given.

What then is human freedom? It is the largest measure of divine freedom which can be given to man. It is the largest measure of the freedom of the Creator which can be given to a creature. For the universal law in respect to freedom applies to God himself and comes from God: it is, that in proportion to the freedom is the happiness; and in Him both are infinite, and both are one.

All the elements of life and being come from God, because He alone is, of Himself; all these elements are elements of His Life, imparted to His creatures to be their life. We have already said, that this is true of freedom, and not more nor less true of freedom than of all the other elements of divine

life. But it is of the very essence of freedom, that what is thus freely given should be freely received; should be received by voluntary acceptance, choice, and self-determination. In this truth we have a key which solves many of the most difficult problems of human nature and destiny. So far as we can understand and apply this truth, we shall understand why and how it is, that we begin our being with an apparent absence of all freedom, and how freedom comes, and grows with our growth, and we are capable of possessing hereafter a degree of freedom utterly beyond our capacity of conception in this life; and in proportion as we grow in freedom, we may grow in happiness. And finally we may comprehend the crowning truth, that it is of the very essence of human freedom, that man is free to co-operate with God in the growth of his own freedom and happiness.

Infinite and eternal growth of Freedom! What can be meant by so large a phrase? I will answer this question as well as I can. I mean by it that God creates man upon all the innumerable earths in the universe, that He may have those upon whom His infinite love may indulge itself in bestowing happiness. And as a created being must be a finite being, and no finite being can receive infinite life and infinite happiness, God has so created man that he may eternally grow in his capacity of receiving life and happiness and all the elements of life and happiness from their infinite source. It is only upon the first steps of this unending progress that we can employ our thoughts, for them only can we in any measure hope to comprehend. But they may suffice to show us the laws of this progress, and its direction.

What freedom, or free agency, is, and whether there be any such thing, has been much discussed, from the first beginnings of metaphysical inquiries. And a large school of philosophers have utterly denied its existence. It was always easy for that logic to come to this conclusion, which founded itself upon the assumption, that nothing was true

which it could not prove, and that nothing existed which it could not comprehend. That logic is *natural* logic; the logic of the *natural* mind. For all logic must proceed from some assumptions, because it must use as the means of proof some things which it assumes prior to proof. The human mind can assume as fundamental truths, only those which it sees and knows to be truths, by intuition. From them it may reason. This is not more true of geometry than of all other objects of thought. The logic of the natural mind can assume only what that mind sees; that is, only natural things, whether they be entities, or laws or relations. In other places the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is more fully considered. Here it can only be said that it is more than easy for a merely natural logic to come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as freedom; that all things are effects from causes, and these effects from prior causes which could not but produce these effects, and however far you may carry the series backwards, all these causes and all these effects are linked together as one chain of necessity. It is more than easy for this natural logic to come to this conclusion, for it is the inevitable consequence of its primal presumptions; and its argumentation is unanswerable on its own ground.

This conclusion is inevitable, so long as this series of causes and effects is carried only *backwards*, and not *upwards*. And this logic, and the minds which love and use this logic, cannot carry the series *upwards*, because this would bring them surely and speedily into the presence of the *supernatural*; and they were, and are, wholly incapable, because unwilling, to recognize or use anything or any truth above nature. To them any words must seem utterly senseless, which indicate that this series of causes and effects began from God, as the cause of all causation; from God who imparted to all the parts of the series which refer to the human mind and character, the element of freedom.

But while such logicians in all ages come to the conclusion that there is no such thing as freedom, they have never succeeded in persuading even themselves, that their conclusion was altogether true. They have succeeded in darkening their own minds and the minds of others to a considerable extent. They have produced a conviction of greater or less strength, either that there is no God, and then that all things come to pass under an inexorable law of causation and succession, or else that there is a God, where omnipotence binds all things together by the fetters of fatality.

It is however probable that no human mind was ever yet wholly divested of the sense and certainty of free agency. For every man knows at every hour that he acts in such or such a way, because he chooses so to act; and it is of no effect to tell him that he *chooses* under a necessity which governs his choice. He *feels* that this is not true. If there is no freedom, there can be no such thing as duty, or responsibility, or right or wrong, or good or evil. And however obscure a man's thoughts may be about these things, it is probable that no mind capable of any thought was ever wholly denuded of these ideas.

What is freedom? It is no more capable of definition, than thought, love, or life. These ideas are those of the *intuitive reason*, and this reason hands them over to the *discursive reason* (if I may make use of these old but good terms); and if the discursive reason accepts them honestly and intelligently it may make infinite use of them. But they cannot be defined with certainty, for the plain reason that there are no ideas more definite and certain by means of which these may be made definite and certain.

Take, for example, the word Life. Says Stahl, life is "the condition by which a body resists a natural tendency to putrefaction;" but this is only a description of one of its functions. And Kant says, that life is "an internal faculty producing change, motion and action." But this is only a

description of other functions ; and so is Erhard's definition, that life "is that which produces motions serviceable to the body moved ;" and Schmidt's, that life "is the activity of matter according to the laws of organization." All these definitions are easily found in common books. And then there is the definition of Bichat, most generally accepted in recent times, — that life "is the sum of the functions by which death is resisted." But what does this tell us excepting that where there is life there is not death, and where there is death there is not life ? And when Whewell modifies, and perhaps improves Bichat's definition, saying that life "is the system of vital functions," what is this except to say in the shape of a formula, that "Life is Life" ?

Nor can there be a better definition, and every departure from it makes a worse one. Or, in other words, there can be no helpful definition of Life, and every attempt to make one, limits unduly and darkens and confuses the idea. Life may be *described*, but not *defined*. It is just so with Freedom. And yet that Life and Freedom are realities is known, is felt, is believed and acted upon, and ought to be so, because it is true and certain. Instead of Freedom we may say Liberty, Free will, Free agency, or Self-determination. These terms are not identical in the thoughts which they express or convey, and one of them may be more appropriate in one connection, and another in another ; but neither of them is a definition of either of the others.

It is not true that freedom has no existence. It is however true, that freedom, like all the elements of divine life which being imparted to man make him to be man, as Love, Wisdom, Power, and Life itself, are in God infinite and absolute, and are in all his creatures, finited, limited, and imperfect ; and all are in man capable of indefinite advance towards the perfection which belongs to them only, in their source and origin.

Man begins with almost the least possible amount of freedom. He has only a little physical freedom ; only that of

moving his limbs and members to some extent; and he has less of this than most animals have at birth. From this lowest point he ascends. His physical freedom is developed; his mental freedom is born and grows; and at adult age, — a period fixed by law in all civilized countries, — he is called “free.” He takes his place among men, with his freedom acknowledged.

But the freedom thus seen and known and acknowledged is only external freedom. There is a far higher, and a far better freedom for him. This is spiritual freedom. In one sense, and considering the subject under one aspect, he cannot but have this freedom, and he cannot but exercise this freedom, and is not free to reject this freedom. For it is always true, that every man is, of necessity, — that he *must* be, — what he chooses to be. His destiny is in his own hands, and he cannot cast the burthen of deciding it upon another. Of course there are cases of insanity, or imbecility, and there seem to be cases when external circumstances press upon character with invincible force. But I am referring to the normal and not the exceptional condition of man. And as to the last mentioned exception, while I am unwilling to deny that external circumstances *may*, in some instances, hold the man, even through life, in the same want of spiritual freedom and responsibility which belongs to childhood, I believe that in most if not in all of the cases which seem to be such, the influence of these circumstances, however adverse to all good and however irresistible they may appear to be, is in some way controlled or guided by Divine Providence in such wise as to enable the man to construct the foundations of his own character, and therefore of his own destiny. The insane or imbecile who live to adult life or even old age never live to *maturity*, and when they die are in the other world in somewhat the same condition as those who die infants.

In this sense therefore, freedom belongs to humanity as

one of its essentials ; as one of those elements without which it would not be human ; as something which belongs to it as soon as it exists and can never be taken from it. But here we must apply to freedom the same law which we apply to all other of the elements of the divine life, which being imparted to man, make him to be a living man ; to love, to wisdom, to power, and to Life itself.

Each one of these elements of life, infinite in its source, is given to man, to be received by him as life, and in his life. It is, first, so received by man in that inmost of which we have no consciousness. And whether it shall come forth into consciousness and act depends altogether upon the question, whether the externals of the man permit this influent life to flow forth. And the question, in what degree, and in what way and in what measure of its original purity or with what mode and measure of perversion, this life in the inmost comes forth into conscious knowledge and act, depends not only upon the degree, and the way in which these externals permit this life to flow forth, and to become conscious, apparent, external life, but upon the limitations, the form, it may be the perversion, they give to it. This universal law is applicable with its full force and all its effects, to freedom.

One of the effects is this, neither love, nor wisdom, nor power, nor life, ever is or ever can be unlimited and unqualified, or felt to be so by any man, in this world or the other, nor is freedom. When we pause to reflect, we are always conscious of the limitation and imperfection of all these things. And even when we are most joyful and exultant in the conscious possession or exercise of either of them, a moment's thought will tell us, that it might be more.

And with all men, spiritual freedom is as small and feeble at its birth, as is the physical freedom of the child at its birth, or indeed smaller, if it then exist. It is small and feeble at its beginning, and grows and strengthens by exercise. It is small at first, for spiritual freedom is the power of resisting

evil and choosing good by self-determination ; and the power of resisting larger evils can only be acquired by resisting lesser evils. By this law Divine Providence is governed in adjusting the series of questions and of conflicts through which we must pass, through which we may pass with ever ascending steps, through which we may approach nearest to Him, and possess and rejoice in that which is nearest to perfect freedom.

God leads man to himself, by his conscience. And by conscience is meant not merely the knowledge that there is a difference between right and wrong, and the power of discriminating between right and wrong, but a preference of right over wrong, and something of happiness in choosing, doing and being right, and something of pain in choosing, doing or being wrong. And this conscience may be awaked — to use a better phrase, it may be given of God to the child and received by the child, — at an early age. Through all the immaturity of childhood it partakes of that immaturity. But in every instance however slight, in which a child reflects or perceives that this conduct is right, and that conduct wrong, and prefers the right, in that instance conscience speaks and freedom acts, and the conscience becomes clearer to see more promptly and more certainly the difference between right and wrong, and the freedom stronger, to choose the right.

Within all this, as the life of it, is the Divine Providence ; giving freedom, and giving the desire to do right ; and always providing from first to last, in all things great or small, and by influences of every kind, that the child and the man shall be led to possess his freedom, to exert his freedom, and to enlarge his freedom. *Led*, but not *forced* ; for it is of the very essence of freedom that it cannot be and shall not be forced.

And yet there is through the life of all men a great deal of force or compulsion exercised upon them. No one has in all things just what he would have. He is driven to do what he

would not, by want, by terror and by distress. In all this there is little freedom. But it is all permitted, to break down those lusts and proclivities and habits which would make a rightful use of freedom impossible. And when they are so subdued, that the right use of *some* true freedom is possible, then that measure of freedom is given. In circumstances of sickness, suffering and fear, most men repent and resolve to do right, and if they then can choose, do choose the right. But this is not done in freedom, and it is of little use, except to prepare for choice and action after the compelling circumstances pass away and freedom comes. Then, if the choice be of evil, it is proof that the former choice was not a free one, and seven evil spirits worse than the former take the place that was swept and garnished for them by that enforced repentance. But if the choice be of good, there will be a rightful use of the freedom that was prepared for by the states which have passed away; and this use of freedom will confirm and enlarge the freedom.

But I repeat, for the truth is a most important one, — man is always *led*, but never *forced*, to have and to exercise aright his freedom, because it is of the very essence of freedom that it should not be forced; and therefore *led* to do this, no farther than he is willing or can be made willing to do this.

Even as I write these words for the second time, I feel how difficult it is to apprehend aright the great truth they are intended to express.

There are those who find it impossible to consider God as free. This is so not only with those who think there is no other God than the Sum of the laws and forces which constitute the universe, and of those who holding that there may be a personal God, believe that he must be bound by the inexorable law which makes every effect follow of necessity from its cause, — but of those also who hold that God is bound only by the laws of His own divine order. This, they say He cannot transcend; and because He cannot, there

is, — although He is a God of Love, — vast suffering on earth, and a hell.

But this error passes away, when we remember that God is Love and also Wisdom, both perfect, and both One. In the degree in which we understand this, we understand, that while infinite love must ever regard and be guided by infinite wisdom, it is the one work of infinite wisdom to be *not* the hindrance, but the instrument of infinite love. From the perfect wisdom of God comes His perfect order. And the reason why He cannot transcend this order, is that this order is the fruit not of wisdom only, but of love and wisdom as one, and therefore if He could transcend this order, it would be because His love was imperfect. Infinite love cannot transcend its own order, because it cannot violate itself; cannot become anything but love and perfect love.

Freedom respects order, and order respects freedom; and all true order is for the sake of true freedom, and enlarges and protects it. And in their infinite source, freedom and order are one. Of this unity in its absolute perfection, we can form no adequate idea. But this truth comes down to earth, and here it becomes, here it may be seen, as an universal law. And that law is, that the order which does not keep freedom before it as its purpose and its end, is tainted with infernal disorder, and is on its way to despotism. And that freedom which does not respect and value and love order as its best protection, is tainted with an infernal tendency to license, and is on its way through chaotic anarchy to the loss of all freedom.

The mystery and the difficulty lie in comprehending how infinite love can be manifested in the life and destiny of man, and reconciled with all the suffering that is there. The key to this mystery is in the truths, that because the divine love is infinite, it cannot seek anything less than the highest possible good; that the highest good is the choice and love of good by voluntary self-determination; that this highest good

cannot be attained except through the freedom of the highest creatures whom He causes to be; and that this freedom necessarily implies freedom for evil or for good; and that from the wrongful exercise of this freedom suffering arises.

To many these words will seem to be words of no meaning, or, at best, "a hard saying." It is a hard saying. It must be so, to us, standing so far as we are from confirmed, conscious, and rejoicing freedom, and the clear perceptions which belong to it. But these words may have for us some meaning, as we know the joy of some rightful exercise of true freedom, and know then what happiness is. And that meaning will grow into fulness of light as we advance upon the path of freedom thus opened to us.

Quite akin to this mystery, or seeming paradox, is another. It is, that the more we are led by the Lord, and the more conscious we are of being so led, the more freedom we have, and the more consciousness of freedom.

The difficulty here is, that which we find in conceiving of being *led by love*. There is little in us, in our low estate, to enable us to comprehend that love, which while unceasingly watchful to lead us and to help us, has never one particle of a desire to control or coerce us. We desire freedom, and are impatient under restraint, and do what we may to escape from it. But our love of freedom, our desire to escape from all that hinders it, are His gifts to us: they come to us from Him, and are in Him and His before they are ours; and in Him they are infinite and He would impart them to us in the highest degree in which we could receive them without perversion and without harm. It is necessary for the purposes of His providence, that we should be sometimes scourged away from sin, and bound as with iron fetters. But our desire to escape from this miserable compulsion is but a small part of his infinite desire that we should escape, and He uses **all** possible means to bring us into a condition in which it may be possible for His love and His wisdom to liberate us.

The highest archangels, those who are freest and happiest, are those who are most constantly led by Him ; and their consciousness of this constitutes their happiness ; for it is a consciousness, — far beyond our capacity of conception, — that His leading is of love, and that it is love ; and that the more they are led by Him, the more they permit His love to bless them with freedom and happiness.

We may be helped to understand this by contrasting it with its opposite. The life we inherit from our parents must be the basis of our personal life, and must ever remain as the permanent foundation of our personal life, or rather as the roots out of which it grows. But what we inherit from our parents is a spiritual organism, full of tendencies, proclivities and possibilities, which we may regard as vessels receptive of life. As they are filled with life, we live. But they are filled from above and from below. They are filled by life which in its origin is perfect love, but which comes to us through those who so temper it and modify it, that it suits and may be received in our capacities of life. If it came only through those who are above us, only our capacities of good would live. Then our life would be partial and one-sided, and in our whole selfhood we could have no freedom. Therefore life comes to us also from those who are below, and whatever thus comes animates our capacities of evil. And the infinite wisdom is at every moment exercised, so that our whole life may be equilibrated, and therefore open to our self-determination ; while it is the work of His providence, that these influences may be such as shall lead us, so far as is possible without crushing our freedom, to choose influences from above and therefore to invigorate our receptability of those influences, and to resist and therefore to weaken our receptability and our need of influences from below.

But with what a difference do these influences come to us. When they come from above, they come from those who

know what freedom is, and what is the happiness of freedom. When they come from those who are below, they come from those who have no knowledge of true freedom or true happiness; they come from and they come with the desire to enslave us. For a time, this may be concealed and unknown on the side of good and on the side of evil. For a time all good influences have their work to do in overcoming inclinations to evil, and resisting habits and tendencies; and then their work seems to be a work of compulsion. But let it go on to its consummation, let evil inclinations and habits and tendencies be overcome and put away, then, and only then, we know and feel that we are free, and the freedom within the influences which have made us free, comes into our consciousness, and brings with it its happiness.

So at first, while our proclivities to sin are in full force, the life that fills them seems to us to promise freedom, and a life which indulges them seems to us the only free life. And therefore we regard whatever opposes them as restraint and compulsion. Let this feeling grow, and let it be confirmed by our self-determination to evil, and the influences of good retire, baffled, defeated and suppressed. Then is our life evil. And then where is our freedom? We find ourselves the slaves of our lusts. It is they which overmaster us. It is they which lead us to destruction. It is they which bring upon us, even in this life, mischief and ruin, which such slaves of sin often see afar off, and look upon with terror, but step by step approach, and deliver themselves up to it, bound hand and foot and heart.

Such is the difference between true freedom and false freedom. The angels have true freedom and true happiness, and know it. And they also know that they have it because they have been delivered from the lusts of self-love. And when an emotion of the conquered lust returns, as return it will for their instruction, they see in it and in the self from which it comes, the source of all misery, they turn from it in

terror, they turn from it to the leading of the Lord; they seek this more earnestly, and give themselves up to it more devotedly; and then they know that the emotion of old lust was suffered to come into their recollection and their consciousness, that it might invigorate their dependence on their Father and their love for Him, and so enlarge and confirm their freedom and their happiness.

All evil spirits believe that they are free, excepting when they are under coercive discipline. They imagine no other freedom than the freedom of self and of lust. And the angelic freedom of deliverance from self, and dependence upon God, seems to them only abject slavery. For God controls them too, to save them from inflicting deeper mischief on themselves. But He controls them only by terror, only by compulsion. They know that they live in subjection to Him; and their only idea of freedom is to escape from this subjection.

All that has been said of heavenly freedom, and of infernal freedom, is necessarily exhibited in human life and human feeling or conduct, so far as these are under influences from above or influences from below.

If we receive life, and with life freedom, primarily from God and derivatively from angels, we receive it from those who have not perverted the life or abused the freedom which they have themselves received from God. In Him, that Life is the love of imparting itself, in the greatest possible degree, and in the highest possible purity, and the love of imparting the utmost freedom as a necessary element of divine life, and a necessary condition for rightly receiving divine life. Hence, there is in the divine providence everything of leading, but nothing of compulsion; everything of assistance, but nothing of force. For if man could be made good by compulsion, all men would be made good by Him who desires nothing else.

Because angels live by receiving and making their own

this divine life, it retains in them, not its infinitude, but its characteristics. Therefore it is their highest happiness to impart their own freedom; to teach the truth they have learned, because it is that truth which makes them free; and to excite the affections which will welcome and love that truth that it may guide them to good. But however earnest and devoted their desire to help men to be good and wise, there is mingled with this no desire to compel men to be either. Whatever pain it may give them to know that their efforts to help men are resisted and overcome, they yield at once when this is certain, and are always on their guard that their efforts to help shall not be tainted with the desire to force.

And then, if we live by receiving from the angels the life which they have made their own, we must receive it as it is; not in the measure in which they have attained to it, for we have not yet attained to that measure; but if we receive that life we must receive it with its characteristics. We must therefore desire to impart the freedom we have, for we must know its value; we must place our own happiness in giving to others all the happiness we can; but always in offering it to their free reception, and never anything more.

But, that we may be free, and that our freedom may grow by our own exercise and cultivation of it, angelic influences meet in us, as has been repeatedly said, with influences from below; for they are so equilibrated as to leave the choice to us. And if we choose, if in any day or hour we give by our own self-determination prevalence to influences from below, and live from them, that life also will retain its characteristics.

It had become their life from whom it comes to us; and because it is their life, it has in it no true freedom, no love for, no knowledge of, no thought of, true freedom. They who give it us, desire that we should become theirs, their property, their slaves, by receiving it; and if we love and

choose the life that comes from them, we receive it, and with it its characteristic desire to make others our property, our slaves. Angels know and rejoice in knowing that their life is God's life given to them, and they desire most of all, that men should learn this and learn to rejoice in it. But they who are below us have no knowledge of God but as their master. He is their Lord, but only in the sense of irresistible strength and constant control. They have not the very slightest idea that their life comes to them from Him and is not self-derived ; and to make them think so, would be to make them miserable ; for it would be to offend their pride, self-love and self-worship. Because nothing of this truth or good is left unperverted in their life, nothing of it comes to us in the life we receive from them, but always the reverse. Therefore, however strong may be our desire to help others, and instruct others, and persuade them away from darkness and from evil, and whatever be our devotion to purposes so good, we may be sure that any feeling which would lead us to forget their freedom, or make us willing to restrain or impair it, comes from below ; and that it comes to mingle the infernal love of dominating over others with whatever of good purpose we have.

And yet it is certain, that man never is so free, as when he is compelling himself, from evil to good. When we are tempted to indulge an evil desire, or to do an evil thing, it is an evil life coming into us from below, which animates that desire ; and in that evil life there is no freedom, and no love of it, and no other desire but to make us sin, that we may be the servant of sin. But all this is opposed, in our internal, by life from above ; life which is full of freedom and the love of freedom, and desire to make us free. We may not feel this in the hour of conflict. If those from below have ruled us, and because they have established their dominion the only question is whether their dominion shall be overthrown, we may, perhaps we must, so far side with them, at first, that we

feel as they feel that only to be freedom which is a free license to sin without rebuke or chastisement. But they who have come to help us, come to make us truly free; they come with the knowledge of what true freedom is, with an earnest love of it, and an earnest desire to impart it, because only in that freedom can we put evil away. And if we receive it; if we compel ourselves by its help and in its strength to put away our enslaving sin, and to cast away them who through this sin would enslave us, then we shall conquer. And when the conflict is over, we shall be free indeed; we shall know that we are free indeed, and that it was God and his angels who have given us our freedom; and that in and by the freedom they gave us, we have conquered.

Here is the eternal conflict of life. At every moment, as we are older than before, so we are farther on in the way in which we are going, whithersoever it may lead. At every step, our friends and our enemies have disputed the guidance of that step. Never was that step any other than that which we chose to take. Good spirits would not force us, and evil spirits were not permitted to force us, but we were permitted to compel ourselves, if that were needed. And this has always been true, and equally true, in the greater temptations and fierce conflicts which come rarely, and to many never, and in the lesser conflicts, which may better be called questions, which do come to all, and often. They come whenever we have to decide whether we will do right or wrong; whether we will indulge and strengthen the love of right or the love of wrong; whether we will accept or reject a truth which is offered to us and is within our capacity of apprehension if we choose to exert it; whether, in matters of affection or those of belief, we will listen to the multitudinous voices of those who through our love of self; our mistaken habits, our prejudices, or even our indolence, whisper to us words or thoughts, which if we follow, we must go, at that time, and so far as that step may lead us, downwards. If we turn a deaf

ear to the tempter, and make whatever of effort is then demanded, we turn towards them whose only desire, whose only effort, and whose only effect upon our minds, is to make us free. They are His servants, but His service is not servitude ; they utter His words ; and if we listen to them, through them “the Son shall make us free, and we shall be free indeed.”

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

IN the Sermon on the Mount our Lord gives us a form of prayer, which is also given in the eleventh chapter of Luke, with a slight variation of language, and the omission of the last clause; which is also omitted in many ancient manuscripts of the Gospel of Matthew. This prayer, known in all ages as the Lord's prayer, has always been prominent in the public services of Christians, excepting that in this country, all the churches which discard forms of prayer, make little use, and some of them no use of this prayer.

In the public services of the church of the New Jerusalem it is very prominent; more so perhaps than in any other churches of the present or past ages. By many societies it is the only prayer used in public. And it is believed that it is also very prominent in the family or private devotions of members of this church. There is however nowhere in this church any belief that it is the only prayer which may properly be used, either in public or in private; nowhere a belief that the supplication for help and guidance and support may not be as special and as urgent as the need. We remember that our Lord commands us only to pray "after this manner" — a phrase which exactly represents the Greek words which it translates.

And pray as we will, how can we utter a prayer which is worthy to ascend on high, and pray in any other "manner"? When we use the Lord's prayer, we recognize Him as our heavenly Father; we ask that His name, or all that by which

he is or can become known to us, may be held by us as holy ; that His sovereignty over us may be established ; that His will may be done here as it is done in the realms above, where all life and all happiness rest upon the recognition, the worship and the love of Him as their Father, — and, more than this, we ask that His will may be done in the earth of our minds, or in the lower and external degree of our minds wherein we come in contact with the earth and practical life upon it, as it is done in the heaven of our minds or that internal and higher region, which is open to influences from above and by them may be animated with the life of heaven. We ask for daily sustenance for body and soul, and for that bread of heaven, which may strengthen our knowledge of our perfect and constant dependence upon him, and our love of this dependence. We ask for forgiveness ; for the only forgiveness He can grant who wishes only to forgive, but who can forgive us, only as we forgive others, or as we are willing that He should put away from us hatred, and that selfishness which is the root of all hatred. And finally we ask for deliverance from all evil ; we ask it of Him who alone can deliver us ; and we ask that it may be a complete deliverance ; that it may come to us without temptation. “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Through all the steps of our advance, there must be conflict, temptation, and victory over temptation. But when the end is reached, we are delivered from evil without the conflict and the suffering of temptation, because we need no more of conflict and suffering when He is our king, or His “kingdom” has come ; and our strength is His, and His is all the “power” within us, and we know it and give to Him the “glory ;” or when His “is the kingdom, the power and the glory.” For this closing clause added in Matthew, only states by what means or in what condition of mind our deliverance from evil may be carried to that completion which shall give to our souls the Sabbath of Peace.

What good thing is omitted from this prayer ; what can we ask, that it would be for our eternal good that we should have, that is not asked for when we pray this prayer ? How can we pray aright, and worthily, for any special good for which at that moment we hunger, for any special protection or relief which would then calm our distress or lift us out of sorrow, if we do not, however special or urgent our prayer may be, pray "after the manner," of that prayer which the object of all prayer gives us as a synopsis, a general but a perfect expression, of all good prayer.

In every system of religion, and in every enumeration of religious duties, prayer holds an important place. This is emphatically true of the Bible, and equally true of the Old Testament and of the New. Prayer may indeed be regarded as the universal command of all religion, and the universal practice of all religious men.

And yet many thoughtful persons are troubled by a difficulty of seeing what prayer is, or what prayer does. Can it teach the Omniscient what we need ? Does not the author of the perfect prayer tell us, that our Father in heaven knows what things we need before we ask Him ; and are we not sure that He knows all this, not only before we ask, but infinitely better than we can know it, and infinitely better than we can tell Him ?

And then, can we strengthen His desire to give us what we need ? Can we enlarge or intensify that love which is already infinite ? Can we make that desire for our good any more by adding to it our own desire, when our desire is itself but a finite portion of an infinite desire, coming to us from the Infinite that it may lift our thoughts upwards towards its source.

What then is prayer, and what can prayer do ? To this question the New Church gives an answer.

In the brightest day that ever shone, when light and

warmth filled the glowing sky and bathed earth and everything upon it in effulgence, — if the walls and ceilings of our habitations are closed and impenetrable, what are all the warmth and glow to us in our dark and cold dwellings? But if we open wide our doors and windows, what are they then? Light, and warmth, and new life, new strength, new rejoicing, new sympathy with all who are rejoicing in that fulness of day.

Prayer opens the doors and windows of the soul.

But how it does this work, we must learn from what our church teaches us of the relations between God and man. It is because there is a science of religion, and its truths are systematically bound together, that we are obliged in seeking the solution of any problem, to refer to those fundamental principles which have been before referred to, and must be again in the endeavor to answer other questions.

The foundation of all genuine religious truth is, that He alone is Life, and has Life in Himself; and all created things are created by having His infinite life finited for and adapted to their reception, and given to them to become most absolutely their own.

Let me pause to repeat this great truth. Man lives, because God gives His own divine life to man, to become in man his human life. Swedenborg defines love as “the desire that what is one’s own should become another’s.” We may see this on all scales and in all proportions. When one begins to love another, he desires to give him some good thing. The more he loves the more he desires to give what he thinks good to the person who is loved. And if his love becomes complete he desires to communicate to the object of it all he has of good. We may then form some — a most imperfect — idea of the infinite love of God, when we know that He gives Himself, His own Life, to man, to become man’s own; to become the life whereby man lives. And then there may begin to grow in us some response to this love; our love in

return for His love. Nor will it reach its full stature until we love the Lord our God, with all the heart, mind, strength and soul. But let us return to our immediate topic.

The life He gives us is Love. What life is, or what love is, in its inmost and infinite being, we cannot fully comprehend. But, from what love is when it is in our wills, (which are only forms capable of receiving it), we may attain to some conception of what love is in its essence; and this conception however inadequate, may be just and accurate as far as it goes.

Hence we may see that the infinite divine Life must be, or must have in it, an infinite desire of doing good, or giving happiness. Hence again, this life, or this love, must desire to give itself, for that must be the greatest good. Therefore it creates men; and creates them such that this life may be given to them; and may be so given to them that it becomes their own,—their own life with all the incidents and elements of actual personal and individual life. The foundation of all of this is, as was said in the preceding chapter, freedom, or self-determination; or the power which a man has of choosing what he himself shall love, and do, and be.

In the degree in which man's life is his own is his power of self-determination; and in the same degree is he a person, or a personal being, or himself. And in the degree in which he is this, it is possible for him to receive the influent divine life and make it his own life; and that life will become whatever he may make it although in its origin and essence it is a perfectly free and a perfectly pure love of good. And in the degree in which he can receive this life without perversion, is he capable of receiving with the divine love of good, the divine happiness which belongs to it. Hence, on the one hand, man has not, cannot have, and never possesses, one particle of pure, vital, and enduring happiness, that he has not made his own, by the exercise of his power of self-determination; and, on the other hand, the divine life and

goodness and happiness are all around him, and ever near him, ever pressing for entrance into him, and ever urging him to let them enter; urging him always,—so far as freedom permits,—but never farther.

We may now see what Prayer is, and what Prayer does. It is one of the conditions for the entrance of goodness and happiness into his soul, because the desire of these to enter can be gratified only when there is a responsive desire that they should enter. And prayer is at once an expression of this desire and a confirmation and vivification of it. It is a method and a means disclosed to man and appointed to him, for receiving goodness and happiness, because, whenever he utters from his heart a good prayer he prays for a good thing; he looks distinctly at this good thing, and for the time sees more clearly and feels more deeply that it is good and that he will be better and happier for having it; and this, of itself, does much to remove the falsities and suppress the proclivities which deceive him as to what is true and good. He asks it of God; and the fervent acknowledgment of Him as Father and source and giver of all good, does much to clear away the doubts and obscurities which spring from the natural tendency of the human mind to regard itself as an independent centre and source of its own thought and life. And it is thus that prayer to God enlarges His power; for it makes it possible for Him to give more of that which He always desires to give in the fullest measure.

The power of God is indeed infinite. But the power of God comes from the absolute unity of His infinite love with His infinite wisdom. We have an image of this in ourselves, for we may see this law of the divine life even in that life when it is given to us and becomes our own. For it is impossible for us to put forth the slightest possible strength or effort, except by the union of something of desire with something of thought. We may see therefore, that if the love of God leads Him to desire to impart to us the greatest possible good, He

must see by His wisdom, what are the best means to accomplish this purpose. Two consequences follow. One is, that if prayer be one of the most effectual of these means, we may be certain that God would teach, command and inspire prayer. The converse of this is, that if He has commanded prayer, and if this command enters into all religious revelation of every age and every kind, and if prayer is inspired into the human heart so that it is a universal practice, existing wherever all the voices of religion are not suppressed, we may be sure that this is because infinite wisdom sees it to be one of the most effectual instruments of infinite love.

All difficulty on this subject comes in fact from doubt and darkness as to the existence of God or His care for men. It is metaphysical and ratiocinative. And because a philosophy must be blind which will not see the Light; because it cannot see truth if it refuses to look at the source of all truth; because it can have no knowledge of the true relation of causes and effects if it refuses to carry back the series of causes to the first cause; because finally, the renunciation of self conceit, self-admiration and self-trust is as absolutely necessary to all progress in true wisdom, as the renunciation of selfishness is necessary to all progress in true goodness, — therefore, such a philosophy as this, or any train of thought or inquiry which may be so characterized, can teach no truth, and cannot but teach error; for it has no source but darkness and can lead to no result but darkness.

The simple, childlike, common-sense conclusion about prayer is one with that which is reached by a sound philosophy, using rational metaphysics. All philosophy, as all science, must begin from axioms, assumed to be true. And philosophy may, or rather must choose the axioms of her starting-point, either from the fallacies of sense and the falsities of lust or self-love, or from the simplest and most certain truths of religion. If these last are the axioms of a philosophy, its path is upward and is at every step more luminous. And it tells us

concerning prayer, that it is one of the ways, or one of the efforts, by which man may open his heart for the reception of good affections and his mind for the reception of truth ; or as one of the ways or efforts, by which he may resist, suppress and overcome the tendencies to self-love, self-conceit, and self-worship, and merely sensuous thought or life, which form the great hinderance to his unperverting reception of life and his understanding of truth. It tells us how prayer does in fact enlarge the divine power to do what the divine love desires to do. And therefore it tells us, why He has placed in every religion He has given or permitted among men — PRAYER — and given to it great prominence and value, that thereby this religion might become a means of His possessing the power to bless men as He would bless them.

Let us suppose a human father with a gift in his hand for his child, which he earnestly desires to give. But the very wisdom of his paternal love tells him that his child is not ready to receive it, and would cast it away or put it to a wrongful use and be harmed by it. He *cannot* now give it ; his very love for his child makes it impossible. He tries to inspire his child with a rightful desire for it. He waits, until the earnest prayer of the child assures him that the desire exists and the child is ready to receive the gift and make a rightful use of it and be the better for it. Then he *can* give it ; and he does give it. And in this simple supposition, I believe I have illustrated the whole philosophy of prayer.

In the prayer of Solomon at the dedication of the temple, the words "Hear Thou, in heaven thy dwelling place," occur again and again. And this thought, whatever be the words, must be present in all prayer. Nor is it ever more in accordance with our nature or with essential truth, that a child should beseech his father for a good gift, in the belief that by his earnest entreaty he may get what otherwise he would not get, than it is for man to pray earnestly to God for his gifts, in the very same belief. It was perfect wisdom as well as

perfect love which clothed itself in the words, "Ask and it shall be given unto you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him."

They who pray to Him in simplicity, with no thought unlike in kind to that which might belong to their entreaty to an earthly father, are far wiser than the thoughtful who in the pride and the darkness of self-intelligence, reason away all belief in the possibility of approaching God in prayer. But will their prayers lose in fervor or in efficacy, as they see more clearly, that by prayer they break down the obstructions between them and God, and enable Him to do more for them? His love must always be one with His wisdom, and work in accordance with His order. The end His love has in view is infinite blessing; but because His love is wise, it desires at any moment to give only that which may then be a blessing. When we come into a state in which more may be given, this desire enlarges. And—to refer again to the illustration I have used—when a child by earnest solicitation convinces his father that it may be well to give him what he seeks and so the father becomes willing to give it because he sees it to be well, and therefore gives it,—all this, I repeat, is but a feeble and imperfect but still a just representation of the effect of prayer to God; of prayer by us as His children, to our Father in heaven.

We read of enthusiasts who believe that their urgent prayer for some outward and earthly good is often answered; and they tell many stories illustrative of their reliance upon prayer to supply their wants, and of the justification of this reliance to be found in their experience. In all this there may be much illusion and error; but there may also be some

valuable and instructive fact. I can understand, that a man in want of food, or clothing, or shelter, may pray sincerely and fervently for it, and by this prayer bring himself into a state of mind to look at the thing when it comes as the gift of God, and to treat it and use it to the extent of his ability, as a gift from God should be used. This state may make it well for him that the thing should come; and then it will come. At all events this view of prayer and this use of prayer is nearer the truth, and more conformed to reason and religion, than the renunciation of all prayer on the ground that God knows always what is good for us, and will give that good. It may indeed be doubted, whether a disuse of prayer ever rests, in fact, upon this ground. It may use these words, or take this shape in the thought. But its true cause and origin are to be found in a dimness of belief in the existence and providence of God; for where this belief is clear and steadfast, it would seem to be impossible *not* to pray to Him.

Because, while all things are forms receptive of being in various lower degrees, man alone is the crown of all, he alone is created such that he may voluntarily work with God. Because he *may*, if he will not, the highest work of God cannot be done. And if he will, his capacity so to work, and his consequent receptivity of divine life as his own, — not his own as *from* himself but his own as by the constant gift of God, — enlarge forever and forever. More than this God cannot do, or give; for He cannot take away — His perfect love will not permit Him to take away — that freedom, and power of self-determination, which is the foundation of character, and upon which rests the possibility of man's eternal growth in goodness and in happiness.

Only to them who ask, can it be given. In the 81st Psalm it is said, "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of Egypt: open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel

would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust; and they walked in their own counsels. Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies and turned my hand against their adversaries."

Surely it needs no exposition, no argument, to infer from this, if only we believe that our Father loves us, that if we do not open our mouth and He does not fill it, this is because He, then, *cannot* fill it. That when Israel will not hearken to His voice and will have "none of Him," He gives them up to their own lusts and permits them to walk in their own counsels, only because He cannot do otherwise. And then an infinite tenderness of love utters the lamentation, that His people would not hearken to Him, and would not walk in His ways, because if they only would, He could soon subdue those enemies and turn His hand against those adversaries, to which they now give themselves up.

Only to those who ask can good be given; and asking is prayer. Only those who desire can receive; and desire for any good expressing itself and accompanied with an acknowledgment of the giver, is prayer.

In the chapter which has been already referred to (1 Kings, viii.), it is said, "Then hear in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive; and do and give to every man according to his ways." So will He hear, and do, and give, and otherwise He cannot. "According to his ways" each man is capable of receiving good and becoming good. And one of the ways, of the most effectual ways, by which man may become capable of receiving the greatest blessings which infinite love can give him, is the way of earnest, fervent prayer.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

IN all ages and among all nations, the fact of a life after death has been known. Divine Providence has imparted and sustained this belief in a great variety of ways. But little has been known of the laws, the forms and appearances of that other life. Here, as everywhere else, the gift of truth is gradual and progressive. And now the time has come when Divine Wisdom could see that more might well be given, and more therefore is given. But here as everywhere else, all new and important truth comes with a certain shock to minds satisfied with what they know, and indurated with the belief that what they know is the limit of all that is knowable.

To thinking men of the present age this new truth comes with a peculiar shock. The majority of persons are not thinking men, or do not think much about these things; and they still retain a general and obscure but sometimes, perhaps, a strong belief of a life after death. But there has never been a period, when among thinking men there was so little belief of this kind. One reason is, that their minds have been turned in an extraordinary degree towards the mysteries of life and death. They ask for evidence; they wish to believe; and where they cannot believe they still hope. But they ask for *such* evidence of this truth as satisfies them in relation to truths of a different order. They get no evidence of this kind; they get nothing which seems to them evidence; they

lose all *belief*, while many retain the hope, and try to confirm it in themselves by calling it belief.

The Gospels teach immortality. The reference to another life is constant in the sayings of our Lord. His own Resurrection proved it. While the scriptures given to the Jews seem to refer to another life seldom and remotely, the Christian scriptures found their whole instruction upon it; and the apostle Paul says, "Our Saviour Jesus Christ . . . brought immortality and life to light through the Gospel." That the doctrine of another life is constantly asserted in the Gospels, is almost the only thing that has never been questioned. In a church founded on this belief, we should expect to find a far more universal belief and a far stronger belief than under any other form of religion. But do we find this? Waiving all question as to the reasonableness or folly of the belief, and thinking only of its distinctness and strength, they who have such acquaintance with the condition of thought among Mahomedan and Heathen nations as may be derived from books about them, are compelled to admit that the belief of another life is more *strong* and *general* among those nations than it is among Christians. It was strong, very strong, among the early Christians. It was indeed one of the topics of reproach cast upon them by their opponents, that their certainty of immortality made them glad to die. What has become of this certainty?

One reason for the present spread of unbelief arises, however paradoxical it may seem, from a very general desire, amounting with many to a longing, after belief, after knowledge of this kind. There is an effort after this knowledge; and when it is unsuccessful, the sense of disappointment suggests that there is nothing to be known. And this wide-spread hunger for this truth is one of the indications that the time has come when it may be given. But it does not follow from the hunger for this truth, that it must be readily received when it is offered. How often may

it be well to remember, that the whole Jewish nation were anxiously expecting their Messiah; but when He came, He was not such a Messiah as they expected and desired, and they rejected and crucified Him.

The time has come for this truth, this information, to be given; and it is given through Swedenborg. We have said elsewhere enough to show what we mean by the opening of the spiritual senses. Instances of this have never been common, but have always occurred. This opening of the spiritual senses is always possible; and always takes place when and only when Divine Providence discerns that some useful end may be accomplished in that way. Then this opening of the senses is adapted to this end; it is slight, brief, imperfect, or more and better than this, as the end to be accomplished requires.

It was the work of Swedenborg to do what it had never before been well for mankind, that any human being should be permitted to do. The end to be effected by the opening of his senses was incomparably greater than had ever been effected by these means before. And therefore the opening of his senses was proportionally more complete and more permanent.

He was born in 1688. In 1745, when he was fifty-seven years old, his spiritual senses were opened; and continued open with brief and rare intervals until his death in 1772; that is, during a period of twenty-seven years. During all this time he saw, heard and felt the spiritual world and the persons and things there, in like manner as all do after death. But with two important differences. The first is, that he was prepared by a long and high culture of extraordinary abilities, to understand all that he saw and heard. The next is, that while we shall all go to our final places in that world through many introductory and preparatory experiences, and learn on the way whatever they can teach, his mission, or the end for which his spiritual senses were thus

opened, required that he should go to all places, or rather to places of all kinds, and see and learn things of all kinds.

He tells us that there is a spiritual world; that it is most real and substantial; that men live there an actual bodily and sensational life with all things about them suited to them and to their senses.

Here is the difficulty. Well may it be asked is this possible, is it conceivable? It may be said to me, you say matter is not there, and yet there are hills and streams and houses and garments and food. How can these be where matter is not? I answer they are formed, not of material substance, but of spiritual substance. And then may come the reply, the very phrase "spiritual substance" involves an absolute contradiction; spirit and substance stand in perfect opposition to each other; either excludes the other; that which is only spirit cannot be substance, and that which is substance cannot be spirit.

The only answer to this must be an explanation of what I conceive spiritual substance to be. Nor can I found this explanation upon any thing else than an explanation of material substance. What is matter?

Here I ask a question which has employed the strongest thinkers for thousands of years, or since the beginning of philosophical inquiry. The effort to answer it in the brief space which can be given to it in a work like this, must, it would seem, be futile. I shall however attempt this answer.

The question, what is matter? may be answered in either of two ways. One way is,—it is that tree, that rock, those clouds, and hills, the sun and moon, and the distant stars, and my own body. But how do you know that they are what they seem? Because I see them, and hear them if they are audible, and feel them if they are near. And I know this more certainly than I know anything else.

This is the answer of plain common sense. It is sound and it is true. It is perfectly true. And when we get into

the spiritual world the same question may be asked there, and answered in the same way, and the answer will be just as true there as it is here. And if we attempt to go farther, and get a deeper insight into the nature of matter, let us be careful not to lose what common sense gives us. Here indeed is the test. If the result of our inquiries is to throw a hazy uncertainty over these conclusions of common sense, we may be sure that these inquiries have led us astray. Let us see if we can go farther, and understand something more of the nature of the world we live in, without obscuring our sense of its reality.

When I see that tree, what is it that I, the thinking being, see? It is certain that I see only a small picture painted on the back part of my eye,—the retina,—just as the same picture is painted on the glass of a photographic camera if it be turned towards the tree. And it is painted on the retina by means of lenses formed of perfectly transparent fluids, and shaped to effect this object just like the glass lenses in the camera. Why then do I think I see a tree at that distance and of that size? Because of my experience; but what does this mean? One born blind, whose eyes are couched and so opened in adult life, has not, at first, the least idea from sight of relative distance or size. But he soon acquires it. The babe has it not until he acquires it; the moon is as near to him as the lamp. But he grows wiser by experience. And what is this experience? That of the other senses, and especially, touch. He touches what he can. Presently he sees persons come to him and things brought to him. Then he walks, and touches the floor or ground with his feet; and some idea of time and space and size and distance come to him; and all these ideas ripen in his mind, and are compared together, and from them comes the idea of relative distance, size, and place.

All this is obvious and has always been known; hence all philosophy has agreed that all we know of matter, or can

know of it, is, that it affects us in a certain way ; that it has, or is, the power so to affect us ; that it is this power, or force, which acting through our organs of sense, causes certain states of minds, sensations, or thoughts. "Matter," says Mill, the last philosopher who has undertaken to define it, "is the capacity to produce sensations."

But some philosophers have gone farther. Because the ideas of distance, size and place, or of color, hardness or softness, are all in the mind and nowhere else, and because the mind sees only its own ideas, some have doubted, and some have denied that the external world has any existence whatever. Here is just the falsity to beware of ; and while it is possible for this falsity to obscure our perceptions, it can never do more ; it can never supplant the truth ; for that truth is fastened upon us, and no man ever yet really doubted the existence of an external world.

Nevertheless I believe this external world consists of power, or force, only ; here using the word force in the sense in which it is now commonly used by writers on this subject. I say there is *out of us*, and not a part of myself, force ; and it exerts such a power over and upon our minds through our senses, that it produces the ideas, impressions and sensations we are conscious of. And all that we can know of outer things, by sensation, is that they produce those sensations.

I go one step farther. This force is Divine Force ; for God is the only *origin* of force and everything else. It is by the putting forth of this force in this way, that the universe of dead things and of living things is created and kept in being. This divine power coming down from its infinite origin, creates from itself forms or modes of being through which it acts upon us in a certain way. And these forms or modes of being are most true and real existences, constituting a true and real external world, which stands in a certain relation to our senses, and through our senses, to us.

Thus far I have said nothing that is new. For a part of it I can find authority in all works of philosophy; for much of it in many works; for all of it in some. But now, I must say an entirely new thing. It is this.

The same force which thus creates for us while we are in this world, bodies in which we may live, organs of sense by which we may perceive, and things to be perceived, performs a precisely similar work for us after we go from here, and are in the spiritual world. There too it gives us bodies in which to live, organs of sense by which we may perceive, and things to be perceived. There too these things constitute as they do here, a most true and real external world, which stands in a relation to our senses, and through our senses to us, that is in many respects similar to the relation of the external world to our senses, while we live here.

All who believe, or even hope, that we live after death, must believe or hope, that we live *somehow*. And then too they must believe that this life is introductory to that, and in some way preparatory for that. But can it seem to any one, probable, that the life to which we are thus introduced by this, can be utterly different from this; can it seem rational to suppose that we can be taught, trained and prepared in one world for the other world, if the two worlds are perfectly different from each other and have nothing in common? Is it not more probable and more rational to suppose that infinite wisdom would teach and train and prepare us for that other world, in a world which is in general and in its relation to us, similar to the world for which it is preparatory? For it is He who creates both worlds; the one for the other.

But, on the other hand, this world is *only* introductory to that. It is for a very brief time; that is for eternity; this is for preparation, and that for result. Should we not conclude that we may expect to find that world so far like this, that our preparation here and our whole habit of being would not be wasted and pass into nothingness, and yet that

the other world would differ from this so far as its difference in purpose would require. And that is precisely what Swedenborg tells us. That world is like this in general, and in its adaptation to our nature and our needs; but with important differences.

To treat of these differences as intelligibly as I may and as briefly as I must, I begin with considering Space and Time; for on them these differences are mainly founded.

The ideas of space and time are in every human mind. But it is conceded by all philosophers that space and time do not exist by themselves as independent finite entities, or things. They have been called laws of thought, or conditions of thought, or necessities of thought. We measure things of sight and touch by them and cannot help doing so.

Moreover we measure each of them by the other. Our only primary measure of space is the quantity thereof which a thing moves over in a certain time when going at a certain rate. Our only primary measure of time is the quantity thereof which a thing occupies when moving over a certain space at a certain rate. From these primary measures we derive the subordinate measures of space and time in common use.

If they measure each other, that is if space be the only measure of time and time be the only measure of space, it follows necessarily, that whatever affects the one, affects the other.

In this world we have a permanent and constant standard in that revolution of the earth, which causes the apparent revolution of the sun, and through this causes days which are capable of exact measurement, and of precise division into hours and parts of hours. In the spiritual world there is no such revolution. What should we do or be here, as to time, without the motion of the sun, or without definite days and hours, uniformly measured for all men alike? But there, they have no such measure. They have seasons, day and night,

cold and heat, darkness and light ; but they are neither caused nor measured there as they are here. I must not let this topic carry me too far. I may say however, that as it is *day* on any spot of earth, when that is turned towards the sun, and night when that is turned from the sun, it is day for those in the spiritual world when they are turned towards the Lord, and night when they are turned from Him. And with all who are there, these states, in some form or other alternate.

But to return. Because there is not there the measured revolution of the earth, constant and alike to all men, it is manifest that time must be a very different thing there from time here ; and if time is different, space and place which are measured by time, must be equally different.

And now let us remember that the outside world is created, there and here, through the inside world, and in correspondence with it ; or all things external to us are created through the thoughts and affections within us. The creative power, issuing from its infinite source, reaches the spiritual world, and there creates the spirits of those who are there, and through them creates the spiritual external world. It comes down to the earths, and in each of them creates the spirits of those who dwell there and through them their external world. And in every earth, before human beings lived upon it, this creative power by influx through the spiritual world guided and controlled by infinite wisdom, gradually created the earth and all things on it and formed it into a fitting habitation for human beings.

In both worlds, all the externals thus created by and through internals correspond to the internals. But in this world the outer world is but the common resultant, so to speak, of correspondence with all who are upon it, in all ages. Here men of all descriptions are mingled together, and the purposes for which we live require that it should be so. There is a distinction into races, nations, tribes, which occupy distinct locations, and there may be something of specific corres-

pondence. But in general, the whole earth corresponds to the whole of mankind ; and in its several parts down to the minutest, it corresponds to the several elements which constitute the general mass of human nature and character.

Not so is it in the spiritual world. There, the necessity of a consociation of all persons of all kinds has no existence. The laws of affinity come into operation. The good gather to the good, and the good of each kind to the good of like kind ; and so it is with the evil. Hence the correspondence is there individual and specific. Each society consisting of those who resemble each other in general, the region which all inhabit and the things all contemplate, are the same for all ; while those things which belong more specifically to each individual are in more specific and exact correspondence with him. Hence every one there sees in his habitation, and in every thing which his eye looks on, that which is a more or less exact mirror of his thoughts and his affections. Here, one sees that which is a mirror of the thoughts and affections which belong to humanity.

So too, as the purposes for which we live require here this mingling of all and therefore this general correspondence, the same purposes require that the whole external world and space and time by which it is measured, should be indurated as it were and fixed in hard, unyielding material, over which we have little power, and which may re-act against our efforts and to a large extent control us. For we live here for effort, conflict, and change for better or for worse through conflict. Hence this external world is not yielding to our thoughts and affections as individuals and does not change with them. When we die, all this ceases. Conflict terminates, for as the tree falls it lies. Now, not only is the general consociation separated by the working of affinities, so that the correspondence of the external with the internal may become individual and specific, but this correspondence is always exact, and externals change as internals change. Space and time are

there; but they are no longer laws of thought, controlling thought and affection; they are now only instruments of thought, and thought and affection control them.

For example, here a man may love one at the distance of many miles, and ardently desire to be with the loved one. But he cannot be with the object of his love, except by passing over the separating distance, step by step. There, in that world of order and affinity, if one so loves another, that other will so love him. Their desire to be together will be mutual. And this desire extinguishes the space between them and brings them together.

There is yet another difference between this world and the spiritual world. We know that in this world, things appear very differently to different persons. We have in this a dim intimation of what we shall have in its fulness in the other world. There, things change their aspect utterly, when they are looked at by those who are in a distinctly different state of thought and affection. They who have gone down, are surrounded by externals which for them may be invested with every charm. But let an angel look on them, let his light, the light of heaven, fall on them, and they lose all beauty and become but a wasted wilderness. So it is with all the objects of all the senses. So it is with the persons themselves. For while the lost seem to each other men and women, and may be beautiful and attractive to each other, to the angel they seem hideous and deformed; and so Swedenborg who saw them in the light of truth and of heaven, usually describes them.

Scientific men are now agreed that from our sun come all the sustaining and controlling forces that preserve our earth and make it habitable for men. More than this I believe to be true. Science has but to advance in the path it is now pursuing, to reach the conclusion, that the same forces which preserve the earth created and formed it, and when science becomes religious it will see in the suns the central instruments

of the divine work of creation. And here too the law of correspondence prevails. There is a sun in the spiritual world; a spiritual sun. It is not the Lord; but it is "the first proceeding" (I use the phrase of Swedenborg) from the Lord. And He is in it; in it by His Love, which radiates from it as heat; in it by His Wisdom, which radiates from it as light; in it by His Power, which goes forth from it to create and preserve the spiritual universe. And through this spiritual Sun the Divine Proceeding goes forth and lower down and creates our sun, and through it the material universe.

The angels do not worship their sun. They know it is not the Lord; but they know that it is His Effluence. The heat that comes from it to them is heat; but when it animates and cheers them most, they most rejoice in the certainty that it is the clothing and instrument of His Love. The light that comes from it to them is light; but when it fills their universe with brightness and with glory, it is yet more glorious in their thoughts, for they perceive it to be the clothing and the instrument of His Wisdom.

Love and Wisdom, distinct but One in perfect conjunction, constitute the Divine. In man that distinctness remains, and that conjunction is never perfect. I shall presently speak of the classification of spirits by the prevalence in them of love over wisdom, of affection over thought, on the one hand,—and on the other, the prevalence of wisdom over love, of thought over affection. I advert to it now, to say, that to those of the first class, the light of their sun seems glowing with heat; to those of the second class, the sun is rather as the moon, in which light predominates over heat.

The aspect of the spiritual sun and its place in the sky which bends all-embracing over men there as over men here, are determined by the relations of those on whom it shines, to the Lord. What He is to them, and where He is in their thoughts and affections, that their sun seems to them, and there it is in their sight.

Thus far I have been speaking mainly of the ultimate condition of those who pass from this world into that. But there is an introductory and preparatory condition even there. It is not one in which the ruling elements of the character may be changed as on earth, but one in which these ruling elements may be developed, liberated from all opposing tendencies, with all disguises cast away. But of this I shall say more presently.

And now that I have read over all that I have written of this spiritual world, I am painfully aware how imperfect my conceptions are and how inadequate even to them my expressions are. To some extent it must be so while we live here, in the space and time of this world. It is necessary, most necessary, that this world should be to us, as it is in fact, a most real and actual world, and whatever brings over it a dreaminess or uncertainty cannot but do us damage. And for that reason it must be difficult for all, impossible for many, to form a perfectly distinct conception in all its details of that other world, for the contrast with the world we live in, might so far lessen the hold of this world upon us and our hold on it, as to prevent us from walking through it, steadfastly and earnestly, doing our duty with all our heart, at every step.

Let me say one thing which I know that I am safe in saying to all. Be always fixed and firm in the certain belief that while you live here you live in a most actual world precisely adapted to you, to your capacities, mental and physical, and to all your needs; for this is the truth. And be equally fixed and firm in the certain belief that when you die you will rise into another most actual external world precisely adapted to you, to your capacities, mental and physical, and to all your needs; for this too is the truth.

Swedenborg divides the whole spiritual world into three great divisions; Heaven; Hell; and the World of Spirits.

Of these words and of others which he uses in treating of these topics, he speaks in a way which shows that he felt their inadequacy. But he used the best words he could find, and our words are translations of his words.

OF HEAVEN.

Heaven is One; for it is Love; and wherever love reigns there is heaven; or He in whom love reigns, is in heaven, or heaven is in Him. The reason is, that God is Love; that all life is from Him, put forth by Him in creation that He may have creatures to make happy. He can make happy, only by giving that which makes Him happy; and that is Love. He therefore makes beings to whom He can impart His own Love in such wise that it shall become their love. And they who receive it and make it their own by voluntary appropriation, are happy; that is, are in Heaven; and taken altogether constitute Heaven.

But men differ from each other; they differ in the reception of His life. In the first place, there is this great difference; that while all receive it or they could not have life, some receive it and appropriate it or make it their own without perversion, and this is Heaven; and some receive it and appropriate it or make it their own through or by perversion; and this is Hell.

Besides this great difference however there are differences among those who receive it without perversion, and among those who receive it by perversion. No two, indeed, of either class, are entirely alike. But all these differences are capable of orderly classification, and those who receive life in a right way or in a wrong way, those who are in heaven and those who are in hell, are all arranged in consociations according to these differences.

Thus, the love that prevails in heaven, is of two kinds; one is the Love of God himself; the other is the love of the

neighbor; or one is love towards the Lord as the Father and benefactor of all, and the other is a love for one's brethren and neighbors.

Then, it is to be noticed, that the love of the neighbor is not good and heavenly, unless love to the Lord is in it; unless our neighbors and brethren are loved because they are all the children of our Father and therefore our brethren. There is such a thing as a merely natural love of the neighbor, resting only on natural kindness. This may have the aspect of entire benevolence. But it is only one of the many natural feelings. There are others, such as love of ease, of wealth, of luxury, of honor, and the like. No person, probably, is ever wholly devoid of kindness; no one goes through life without ever doing a kindness; and most men certainly are willing to do a kindness which costs them nothing. A natural man may have this element of natural kindness so strong in him, that it causes him to be kind, unless other natural feelings oppose it powerfully; but when they do so oppose it, this kindness must fail. For no kindness can surmount all opposition, and no benevolence can resist effectually all selfish interests, and passions and desires, unless it be a spiritual kindness; that is a love founded upon a love of God, and a recognition of all men as His children.

But among good men who have become angels, there are those in whom this love towards the Lord is both prevalent and prominent; it is the manifest law of their lives and the life of their lives. They constitute the highest heaven; and Swedenborg calls this, "The Heavenly Heaven" (*cælum cœleste*).

Below these are the angels of a lower class. In them too is a true love towards the Lord; and this love is in them the foundation of a warm and earnest charity, or love for the neighbor. But in them the love of the Lord is veiled, and veiled even from their own direct and constant thought and consciousness, by their love of the neighbor, and uses this

love of the neighbor as its instrument of action. They constitute a lower heaven; to which Swedenborg gives the name of Spiritual Heaven (*cœlum spirituale*). The relation of the heavenly heaven to the spiritual heaven, is that of Love for the Lord to charity towards the neighbor; it is that of Love to Wisdom; it is that of the Will or all that is affectional, to the Understanding or all that is intellectual. For the charity of the spiritual heaven is founded on, sustained by, and fed by, a constant recognition of truth and justice in all relations with the neighbor.

But there are yet those who are good, and because good are angels and in heaven, but who stand on a yet lower plane. They are good on the principle of obedience. But it is plain that only so far as a love of God is within this, and only so far as a love of the neighbor is within it, can this obedience be cheerful, spontaneous, glad and heavenly. This lowest heaven is called "The Natural Heaven" (*cœlum naturale*).

They who are in the highest heaven, or the Heavenly angels, are governed only by love, and are taught only by love. And while this love is primarily the love of God, and is seen, known and felt as such, it seeks perpetually the good of the neighbor, and loves the neighbor as a brother and as the child of that Father whom it loves supremely. Their thoughts are wholly dependent on their affections. If any act or any truth is presented to their wisdom, they see its quality at once. They see it by the light of that wisdom which is of love. But the spiritual angels inquire after truth, search into it, and are led by it. They have wisdom, a wisdom which is by us ineffable and inconceivable; and this wisdom guides and governs their love. The heavenly angels are, in a wide sense, affectional, and because so, are supremely wise; while the spiritual angels are intellectual.

This leads us to another distinction which runs through all the heavens; for says Swedenborg, all heaven and every heaven is divided into two kingdoms; the heavenly king-

dom and the spiritual kingdom. And here he uses the words in almost the same sense as affectional and intellectual. So is every society in every heaven; and so is every man in every society. For marriage, spiritual marriage is there, and is the centre, the foundation, the spring of all happiness, as true marriage is everywhere. Husband and wife are one. And while the husband has both intellect and affection and the wife has both intellect and affection, the husband is predominantly intellectual and the wife affectional.

I use the word "affectional" to translate Swedenborg's Latin word "voluntarius," which is derived from "voluntas" the will, and means of or belonging to the will. We have in English no substantive and adjective which stand in the relation of "voluntas" and "voluntarius." Our English translations of Swedenborg generally use the word "voluntary" to translate "voluntarius"; and it may be, or may become by this use of it, the better word. But I employ the word "affectional," thinking it more likely to convey the right meaning of the Latin word.

In every heaven there are innumerable societies, the larger formed of smaller, down to the smallest. How are they all arranged; and how are all the individuals in every society, arranged?

To answer this question, I must refer to a doctrine taught by Swedenborg, which is perfectly new. It is the doctrine of the Human Form. It asserts that this Form is the standard of all order; is an expression of the order towards which all true order tends; for all order is primarily Divine order, and God is a divine, infinite, perfect man, and man is man because God made him in His own image and likeness. And yet I ought not to call this entirely new, excepting as it is new in the sense in which Swedenborg states it, and the degree to which he carries it. For it was a very ancient doctrine, that man is a "microcosm," a little world, and a type of the "macrocosm," or universe. And in all

ages and languages some recognition of this is manifest. What society is there, of which we might not say that this person is the head of it; that others are the heart of it, and others are its hands? Now all this is but a coming to the surface of a most exact and universal truth. In any orderly and well-arranged society, if it have members enough, and each of them labors in his own way so to work that the proper work of the whole society may go forward, and the work of each man, while entirely his own, is in such reference to that of every other, that all their work becomes one work, and that is the work of the society, — in such a society it will be found that the work of the different members bears a correspondence to the different functions of the different parts of the human body. And in heaven this order is complete and perfect.

Hence Swedenborg, when speaking of the employments or the character of certain angels, often illustrates this, by saying that they are in the head, or the heart, or the lungs, or the limbs, or other members of the body.

Let me use this same correspondence to illustrate what has been said of the heavenly heaven, of the spiritual heaven, and of the natural heaven.

Taking the man as a whole, the head corresponds to the heavenly heaven, the chest or trunk to the spiritual heaven, the limbs to the natural heaven. Then again *in* the head, the cerebellum corresponds to the heavenly (or affectional) and the cerebrum to the spiritual (or intellectual); or, I may say, the cerebellum to good and the cerebrum to truth. Then of both of these, the right lobes correspond to good, and the left to truth. Then in the chest, which as a whole corresponds to the intellectual, the heart corresponds to good, and in it the right auricle and ventricle to good and the left to truth; and the lungs as a whole to truth, while the right lobe corresponds to good and the left to truth. And when we come to the limbs, we find right and

left there with the same signification. For everywhere, and in every thing, something of good and something of truth, something which bears some relation to the affectional and something which bears some relation to the intellectual, must meet, or it cannot exist.

Then too we say the brain, in its general correspondence to the heavenly heaven, extends itself by the spinal marrow and the nerves into every part of the frame, and where it does not go there is no life. The brain, by its nerves, goes to heart and lungs; it is not seen there, they are not brains, they are heart and lungs, but it gives them their life and motion and the power to perform their functions. Then, in the heart and lungs, in their operation, it goes wherever the heart and lungs go, by the blood sent to every part, and by the purification of that blood through respiration. And if we remember that thus it is the brain which going everywhere and acting everywhere causes life everywhere in all its various forms, and remember that the head in the human form corresponds to the highest heaven, we may understand why Swedenborg calls the highest heaven the *heavenly heaven*; for it is this, this Love of the Lord, this heaven of which this love is the life, which by its descending and life-bearing influence, constitutes heaven in all which receives this influence, under any form whatever.

Of the employments and occupations in heaven, I can say but little. Indeed I do not suppose I could be made to understand them in their fulness, any better than an Australian savage could be made to understand the actual details of life in a civilized community. We have some help from the doctrine above referred to, that of the Human Form. Heaven, in the sight of the Infinite, is as one man; one greatest man, or as Swedenborg terms it, "*Maximus Homo*." And every angel has his place in that body; his own place, which is not that of any other; and his own work, which is not that of

any other ; while all unite and assist each other ; all recognize each the other in his place and work ; and every one knows that all the others are the better for his work, and they know it and are glad to know it.

There is however one great principle which we can all comprehend. Because God is Love, He has, He is, the eternal desire to do good and to make happy. And they who receive His life into themselves and make it their life without perversion, must have the same desire. Hence Swedenborg says all Heaven is one kingdom of uses. What the divine love is we may see in the fact that it causes eternal, infinite, constant creation, and sustains all the infinitude of life in the universe. And when this divine love enters into a human will, and is received there without perversion, it becomes the love of usefulness. Every angel desires to be useful ; is useful ; and finds his happiness in being useful. We prepare ourselves to become heavenly, by loving to be useful to others. And it is so difficult to have this love, and so few have it, that the divine mercy trains us against our will, by subjecting almost all men to the necessity of work, of work for others, of compulsory usefulness. Thus He may enforce in us the habit of usefulness ; but He uses no compulsion to give us the love of usefulness. That we must acquire by our own free co-operation with his effort to impart it.

It is a saying of one who had great worldly wisdom, that no man works except in the hope of resting. But in heaven no angel rests, or desires to rest, except in the hope of working.

OF HELL.

"The way of the wicked He turneth upside down," says the Psalmist ; and hell is the reverse of heaven.

It is as a man, but as a deformed man ; and so is every society in hell, and every man in hell.

But God is there also. "If I make my bed in hell, behold

thou art there." If God were not there, nothing would be there; no things, and no persons. Because He is there, infinite love and wisdom are there, for they are Him; and there is nothing in Him but love and wisdom. This love and wisdom and the power they put forth, there as everywhere, respect and preserve the freedom of the man as far as the good of the man permits. And the perpetual effort of the divine providence in hell is to lessen its disorder, and the disorder of all its members.

The divine purpose may therefore be said to be the same in heaven and in hell. But the difference is this. In heaven this purpose is effected through the free and voluntary choice and co-operation of the angels, and this is their happiness. In hell it cannot be so effected; because they who are there love and have chosen opposition to the divine life, and brought their own life into permanent and organic opposition to the divine life. Therefore the order and government of hell are, of necessity, coercive and punitory. The object is not to awaken in them the love of good, for that is now impossible, but to bring their love of evil into such subjection, and to impose upon its exercise and operation such limits, as shall make their suffering as little and their enjoyment as much, as their own loves render possible. This is the purpose of divine providence in hell; it is the purpose of perfect love; and it is pursued with perfect wisdom and all the means of unrestricted power.

Hence, it may perhaps be said, in one sense, that every devil is in his own heaven. He is in that condition of things, than which he conceives of nothing better, desires nothing better, and could enjoy nothing better; for if he could he would at once have something better.

So too it may be said, in one sense, that every devil grows more infernal to eternity; and in another, that he may be constantly improving. He grows more infernal, because his ruling love of evil, which is his essential life, must be in-

dulged, or he would perish, for the reason that he has no other life. But he may grow better in conduct, because the infinite mercy of God surrounds him with those restraints and that discipline, which infinite wisdom knows to be best adapted to bring his external life into external order. He is never punished for what he did in this world. But as the elements of character he formed here urge him beyond permitted limits there, he is then punished with whatever circumstances of terror or severity may be necessary to restrain him within those limits.

As earth and life on earth are between heaven and hell, so we may easily see while here, and indeed every man may see in his own experience, both these modes of divine government. Whoever has felt the love of good vivified within him, and felt also that this love was, for the moment, free, unimpeded and most happy, knows how God governs his angels; and knows how little of the sense of government or coercion there is in it. But when he feels that God is punishing and repressing the infernal things within him,—his love of self, his worldliness, his lusts,—then he may know how God governs the hells. This government is perfect and absolute, and guided by a perfect knowledge of what the devils are and what will best conduce to establish among them the best order possible. It may be therefore, that this external order of hell, and the external enjoyments made possible by it, are such at times, that they shall seem to the devils perfect and consummate. It is not heavenly order or heavenly happiness, and never can become that; but it may be its outward imitation. For when self-love and its enjoyment are not in opposition to, and are in subservience to, the good of others, they are more or less good; and in hell this subservience is enforced.

But the fires of hell are never quenched; for the fires of hell are the life-loves of those who are there; and if these fires were quenched they must perish. They are pre-

pared for the devil and his angels, and given to them, not in vengeance, not in hatred, but in compassion and in love. They are given to them not that they may be wretched, but that they may have all the enjoyment which they have left to themselves the possibility of having. They are never quenched; and the devils cannot be reduced to a true or to a constant order. They are never quenched; and the devil must sometimes shake off, or strive to shake off, the fetters which he then feels as fetters; and then comes the lesson and the pain. So long as the serpent lies along the ground, seeking only his own enjoyment but harmless to others, he may not be disturbed; and he may, if he will, forget the poison which he ever carries with him. But if he lifts up his head, and fain would strike with venomous fang, then must his head be bruised. And the heel of divine power, its last and lowest mode of action, presses his head again to the ground. This prophecy in Genesis was fulfilled when our Lord assumed the very lowest ultimates of fallen human nature, that in them and through them, he might do this work in and for all men; for those who will permit it to be done, in one way, but for all in some way.

But let us consider this subject a little more fully; for the eternity of hell is and has always been to many minds a doctrine of very great difficulty. Heaven has been regarded as a place of reward; and hell as a place of punishment; and this is certainly so declared in the literal sense of Scripture. But no good man willingly inflicts pain unless in the hope of thereby producing amendment. And eternal punishment is necessarily ineffectual as to internal amendment, because otherwise it would render itself unnecessary and so cease to be eternal. To impute to God a disposition to punish where nothing can be gained by punishment, and to inflict this punishment infinitely in excess of all possible ill-desert (for no sin *in time* can bear any proportion to punishment through *eternity*), imparts to our conception of the divine character, an element of malignity.

To avoid this it has become common to say that the eternal suffering of the hells is not inflicted by way of punishment, but is the necessary consequence of character. If however the idea of inevitable and eternal suffering is retained, not much is gained by discarding the idea of punishment. And one of the points wherein the doctrine of Swedenborg differs from all that have preceded it, is, its retaining the eternity of hell, and yet discarding both the ideas of infinite punishment and of constant suffering.

In the Gospels Life and Death are constantly spoken of and referred to as synonymous with Heaven and Hell. Spiritual life, eternal life, is the same thing as heaven. Spiritual death, the "second death" is the same thing as hell. Now we have in the words of our Lord, a perfect definition of eternal life, that is, of heaven.

"This is life eternal; that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

If, to know God and Christ whom He has sent, to know them truly and as they are, be eternal life, or heaven, then *not* to know God and Christ is eternal death, or hell. This is as certain as that Death is the opposite of Life.

We have then a definition of heaven and of hell. It is one which is perfectly intelligible in itself, and for which the reasons may be apprehended. To know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, is to know that from which may come all knowledge that affects life, character and happiness. For so far as one knows or has any accurate apprehension of the infinite God and the Divine Humanity, he has this apprehension of God in Himself, and of God in His relations with man. He knows that fact and those relations, from which flow forth all the actions and influences of Providence, from the beginning to the end; all that God has done, or does, or seeks to do, in creation, and in the divine dealings with man. And in the degree in which he understands this, be that degree great or small, high or low,

he possesses a truth from which may radiate all truth. He therefore has in his mind the living germ of all knowledge and all wisdom. And he has all the truths which could supply motives and guidance for that conduct which must lead to happiness.

Let us now remember,—what we must never forget in the consideration of any spiritual problem,—that freedom, individual and personal freedom is the fundamental condition of all human progress, and that the fundamental law of all progress is the voluntary exercise of freedom. For this purpose man lives in this world. He has every facility and every inducement which could be given him without impairing his freedom, for knowing God, and learning to love Him, and so to be happy.

But any man may refuse to use these means, and may resist all these inducements, and so exercise his freedom as to confirm in himself a choice,—a fixed, definite and permanent choice,—of evil rather than good, of falsehood rather than truth, of self rather than God. But when this choice is thus fixed, the character of the man is fixed; and because character determines condition, his condition is fixed. That which is eternal life he does not possess, because he prefers its opposite. He has what he chooses, and he chooses to be in hell.

But is it therefore necessary that he should, through eternity, suffer? or that he should never know enjoyment?

Certainly not. To him, as to the highest angel, infinite love gives all that he can receive. He is, as I have already said, never punished there for sins committed here, for the plain reason that such punishment would be useless. He has in himself and by his own cultivation, tastes and proclivities which lead to the indulgence of selfishness and the commission of sin; and when they produce this effect, so far as to disturb the order of hell and unduly diminish the enjoyment of others, he is punished to prevent this. He is made to suffer, that the experience of suffering may teach him and the fear

of suffering induce him, to abstain from sin, or at least to regulate and moderate his tendencies to sin. By this external discipline his external conduct is controlled.

This is all that can be done. But this is done as effectually as it can be done by love, wisdom and power, all absolute. They who are so governed may be called unhappy, in so far that they have nothing—not one particle—of that which would be called happiness by those who know the happiness of heaven. But they may have all that they conceive of enjoyment. They have as much of this as they can be persuaded to have, or coerced into a fitness for by a discipline which is suited to them. There may be an indefinite advance in their external order, and their external enjoyment; but there can never be any change in the nature of their enjoyment; for this could only come by forcibly depriving them of all that constitutes their life. It would be all that could come to them of punishment and cruelty.

THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

In Heaven are the good; in Hell are the evil; but few, or none, go from this world, possessing a character which qualifies them to go at once and find their place in Heaven or in Hell. They remain for a time in an intermediate state. In this state they pass through experiences which discover to themselves and disclose to others, what they really are. Hypocrisy is impossible; and self-deception equally so. The ruling element of the character, the life-love, becomes manifest and sovereign. Impediments are cast away. The good man feels himself freer to be good than he ever was before, and as one obstruction after another is removed, as one after another of the tendencies to evil against which he had combatted with so much pain and weariness are suppressed, he rejoices with joy unspeakable, over his gain of new life; and thus becomes qualified to find and to take his place in heaven.

From the evil man, all disguises are rent away, and thus he is prepared to find and to take his place in Hell.

To this intermediate state, Swedenborg gives the name of the World of Spirits. They who are there are Spirits, for they have left this world. But they are not yet Angels or Devils.

At night, when we go to sleep, our body sleeps, and if the sleep be profound, the mind, the soul sleeps. If we die, the body does not awake, but the soul does. Death is always sleep. There is a short period of entire unconsciousness. Swedenborg tells us that about the third day from apparent death, the soul is withdrawn. It always existed in a spiritual body; and this spiritual body gave life to the material body. When this spiritual body is withdrawn, the material body wholly dies. The man acquires no new body, and needs none; for he rises in his spiritual body.

He rises with all the thoughts and affections which he had before, and with no other. And when we remember that the spiritual world about any one is the effect of his inner world, and presents itself as the expression of that inner world, and remember also that the man carries with him all his customary thoughts and memories, we may see, that, at first, the objects about the newly risen man are similar to those which he has left. The world is just such a world to him. It is his own familiar world; it affects his senses just as it used to; and he may not know that he is dead and has risen, until he is told, and notices that they are with him who had gone before.

At first, then, there is but little change. This however continues but a short time. Changes come over him, and are represented in changes about him. And Swedenborg gives much minute information concerning these successive changes, or his early and later states.

Much the greater part of Swedenborg's relations concerning the spiritual world and things and persons seen and heard there refer to the World of Spirits. He often sees angels

there, for it is easy for them to come down into this lower state if they have a use to perform there. So he sees devils there, for they are permitted to rise and come into this state, when work is given them to do there. And the appearances of place and change of place, and of all that depends on space and time are the same there that they are here.

Hence, in Heaven and in Hell the external world is far more permanent than our material world, for there the states it represents are more permanent; and the variations are only such as respond to the variations of thought and feeling, making the outer world always new while yet it remains substantially the same. But in the World of Spirits it is otherwise. Changes in the appearances of things take place easily and often and to any extent, as Swedenborg's relations show. And they also show that the external world is there constantly made use of, to instruct, correct and discipline those who are there. And this must be remembered by those who read those relations, and will help them to understand much that they will find there.

Thus, in one long relation, certain well-disposed spirits are disabused of their errors respecting Heaven; for all who believe in this world that there is a heaven are more or less apt to try to imagine what it is, and so form to themselves a fancy, sometimes a strongly fixed fancy, of what constitutes its happiness. Some of these persons had looked upon Heaven as a place where they should enjoy for ever pleasant associations with agreeable and entertaining people. They were gathered together into a spacious house, and there sought out those who were interested in what was interesting to them, and permitted to indulge in the pleasantest intercourse of this kind, until they were intensely wearied and saddened by it. Others had taken literally the notion that they would have perpetual feasts with "Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," and all manner of enjoyments of like kind. They too were indulged with pleasures of this sort, and men

personating the patriarchs sat with them at the tables; and they also soon became satiated and nauseated and prayed for relief. Others expected to be literally "kings and princes," with power and splendor and all things in accordance with their exalted station. And they soon found that these things alone made them miserable. Others had their minds filled with the thoughts of a literal paradise, or garden of exquisite perfection, with all possible delights of that kind. They were introduced to such a paradise, and kept in it until their only thought was how they should escape. Others took literally what is said of the eternal glorification of God, and expected to find heavenly joy and happiness in a perpetual festival of worship. They were taken to a city and temple seemingly devoted to this kind of unending Sabbath. And they tried it until they were so overcome with weariness and listlessness, that they asked for nothing but to be free from it. Many believed that an introduction to heaven and all its happiness could always be granted by Divine Mercy; and they were taught the truth by those whom an angel summoned to relate the various experiences by which they had been cured of this error. Then some were selected to be so prepared that they might enter into a certain actual heaven and remain there a time, and learning from observation what that heaven was, might return to the others and relate their experiences; and this they did.

And what is the sum of all the instruction thus gained about heavenly life? "There is a tendency in the affection of the will of every angel which draws his mind to the *doing of some use*, in which he finds pleasantness and enjoyment. He is thus capable of receiving the love of usefulness from the Lord; and from the reception of this love is heavenly happiness." "The delight of the soul is from love and wisdom received from the Lord; and because love must be active, and is effective through wisdom, both love and wisdom are in the effect, and the effect is *use*. This delight from the

Lord flows into the soul, and descends through the mind into the senses of the body, and completes itself in them; and thence joy becomes joy, and is eternal from the Eternal."

I have not much fear that the conclusion will shock any readers, however strange it may seem. But the *details* must shock all who have no other than the common, the nearly universal belief—if belief it be—in a spiritual world. It is not *these* details which will fill them with incredulity, but it is the assertion that there are *any* details of such a thing; for their belief is, at its best, only a belief that after this life is over and men have lost their bodies and are formless essences, they may be provided for somehow. There is no help for this. For such minds, the fact that there is an actual spiritual world is the revelation, the startling and incredible announcement. They may be so accustomed to say they believe in another life, that they do not know how dim and uncertain is their belief. The question will not be with them,—admitting that there is actual life after death,—is it reasonable to suppose that this can be the manner of that life? It may seem to them that here is the difficulty. But it is not here. It is, that belief of *any* real and actual spiritual life has become in the last degree shadowy and unreal. It is precisely because there is no other belief prevailing but just this, and that even this was dying out, that the divine mercy has now taught that men do live after death, most truly and actually, in bodies, a personal, active and sensational life, with the same organs of sense which while they were here gave life to their material organs of sense, and in an external world that is perfectly adapted to all their senses and all their wants, and to all their capacities of activity and enjoyment.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE MIRACLES RELATED IN THE GOSPELS.

IN a previous chapter I have said much of the relations between the external and the internal. The distinction between these is of like kind with that between the natural and the supernatural; and a large part of what may be said of these two, — of the distinction between them, or the relations between them, — may as well be said of the other two: of like kind, but not the same; and in reference to some topics they are very different. In the chapter on the birth and nature of Jesus Christ, I spoke of the external and the internal. I now have to consider the subject of miracles, and must begin with noticing the difference between the natural and the supernatural; for in a miracle, the natural and the supernatural meet: both are there.

Always has the meaning of these two words, — the natural and the supernatural, — always have these two things, or forces, or phenomena, and the relations between them, been a subject of earnest inquiry, and a most difficult subject. But some knowledge of the two, of the distinction between them, and of the relation between them, and of their mutual dependence and operation, is at least possible, if we begin from the right starting-point; and in this inquiry, as in others of a religious character, this point must be, the purposes of God in relation to man, so far as we can recognize them.

We may also derive some help in understanding the true meaning of the word “nature,” from a consideration of its derivation. It is the English form of the Latin word

“natura,” which comes from a word signifying “to be born.”

It is the will of God, that a man should be born in a body and upon the earth ; that he should thus begin to live. For this purpose God provides for man a body and an earth ; and the body is made out of the same materials as the earth ; and the body and the earth are adapted to each other, and both are adapted to the man.

Let us then say, as our first conclusion, that *nature* means whatever belongs to the body in which and the earth upon which man is born.

But man has also a living soul : he *is* a soul within a body ; and the soul, or the man consisting of soul and body, is created to live for a while upon the earth on which he is born ; and therefore he has faculties which are adapted to this purpose. They are faculties by which he perceives and knows and understands the things of the body and the earth, and lays hold of them, and makes use of them ; and by means of these faculties, which are perfectly adapted to the body and the earth, he may, to an indefinite extent, continually increase his knowledge of the body and the earth, and his ability to use his knowledge for his advantage.

Some of these faculties are of the senses ; others are faculties of thought. But they are all faculties of the soul, because the bodily organs have no faculties excepting as they are the instruments of the soul. All these faculties, whether of sense or of thought, are given to man that he may more and more understand and use the body in which and the earth into which he is born ; and therefore we may call all of these faculties, natural faculties. If we first call the body and the earth, and all the things of both, nature, we may then call those faculties, whether of sense or of thought, which are given for and are adapted to the understanding and use of this nature, natural faculties.

It is obvious that these faculties might reach, in successive

generations of men, any amount of cultivation and development, although each man died when his body died; and might still be only natural. But man does not die when his body dies: he lives a vast deal longer after he leaves the body than he can live in it: he is never to die; and this life is only introductory to another. And he is born into this earthly life, that he may here prepare for the life to which this life is introductory.

Therefore, besides the natural faculties which are adapted to this body and this earth, and to life therein, he has other faculties, provided for and adapted to the other life, and to purposes connected therewith; or provided for and adapted to a preparation in this life for another life. These are faculties by which he may learn something about that other life, and may consciously prepare for it. These faculties are as much *above* the natural faculties, as heaven is above the earth. They are as much more important than the natural faculties, as eternity is more than time. Given to man for no other reason than because he is immortal, they are adapted to make him a happy immortal. They are, in every possible respect, *higher* than the natural faculties, and may therefore be called *supernatural faculties*.

It might seem that the natural faculties of thought are the same with what are here called supernatural faculties, the only difference being that they are employed on different subjects. It is not quite so. Observation, logic and ratiocination may do their work thoroughly and well, when applied to natural things. But if these same faculties, working only in the way in which they work on the natural plane of thought which is proper to them, come to the questions, Is there a God? What is He? Is there a future life? What is that? they will find no God, and no immortality. They may exalt nature, and call it God; and then all that nature can do for them who know it best, is to hide God most completely. They may becloud themselves in the fantasy that "the spark of individual

life is re-absorbed into the infinite whole," and thus give a positive strength to their denial of a future personal life. They have no God, and no immortality. To find these, other faculties, higher than the natural, are required. These are, in many respects, similar, in manifestation and in operation, to the natural faculties; but they are not the same. They *correspond* together. Their relation to each other is the same as that of all things of the spirit to all things of the body, — of all things of the spiritual world to all things of the material world: it is the relation of correspondence, not of identity. There may, however, be no harm in considering these faculties as even the same, if we remember that they act on different planes of thought, use different means, seek different results; and when we look at the affections, which are their motive-power, or at the work they do, the aspects which they bear are wholly different.

There are those in whom the natural faculties of sense and thought are cultivated and exercised, while no faculties higher than the natural come into activity or into consciousness. Such persons may look on those as mistaken, who believe in something other and higher than nature, and who endeavor to employ the faculties which are adapted to the comprehension of this other and higher thing and the truths which belong to it. Or rather persons of the former class *must* look on those of the latter class as simply mistaken; as founding their intellectual efforts and desires on mere nothingness; as seeking, through the ways of fantasy, results which can be only false and foolish.

The distinction between the faculties which are only natural, and those which are higher than the natural, is not now usually expressed by the words natural and supernatural, but, for many purposes at least, by the words natural and spiritual.

When we now attempt to use such words as internal and external, natural and supernatural, natural and spiritual, as

terms of the science of religion, we are embarrassed by the confusion and indefiniteness of meaning which now belong to these words. The cause of this is obvious. Words express ideas, and can only express such ideas as those who use them have; and ideas on these subjects have been, generally, to the last degree confused and indefinite. As the ideas grow more certain and definite with the advancement of the science of religion, these words, and other terms of this science, will become more certain and more definite in their meaning. Thus, when we speak of natural and spiritual, we are wholly wrong, if we only understand, as some do, that certain faculties belong to the material body, and these are natural, and certain others to the spirit, and these are spiritual. All *faculty*, or *power*, belongs to the spirit. The body is only the clothing and instrument of the spirit. It lives only while and only because the spirit is in it, imparting life to it; and the body is, all the while, just as dead *in itself*, as we see it to be when it is separated from the spirit.

The word spiritual, like many other words of our language, is sometimes used in a broad or general sense, and sometimes in a more limited and specific sense. When used in this broad sense, it means all things of the soul, and of the world into which the soul rises at death, in contradistinction from things of the body and of this world. But the words natural and spiritual bear, as religious terms, another meaning. Natural faculties are the faculties of the spirit or soul which are adapted to and employed about natural things and knowledges and uses; and spiritual faculties are those faculties of the soul which are adapted to and may be employed in the acquisition of just views concerning the spirit of man, and the spiritual world and life in it, and so of all spiritual things, knowledges and uses.

All of these faculties, whether we call them natural and supernatural, or natural and spiritual, are given by one God, for one ultimate purpose. And, however different, they are

adapted to this one purpose, by the connection, the harmony, the symbolism and correspondence between the material universe and the spiritual universe; between the body and the soul; and between the things of the body and the things of the soul. The briefest possible definition of the natural and the supernatural may be given, when we say that the natural looks only outwards and downwards, while the spiritual looks inwards and upwards.

The common opinion about the natural and the supernatural is, that natural things move on in an orderly way, and in accordance with established laws; and that the supernatural comes in somehow as an abnormal force, violating or suppressing law, and in that way proving itself to be supernatural. There is much error in this.

All faculty, or power, or force, is, in its origin and primary condition, supernatural. In God there is, as of His essence, that which in ourselves we call Love. We see it as affection, desire, impulse, and all the impelling force of the soul; and when we think about it, we see that its total absence would make all action impossible. What this is in God, we cannot adequately conceive. But coming from Him into human wills, whether in the spiritual world or in this world, it becomes Love in all its forms. Then, passing down still lower, and into the material universe, it there becomes Force, — force in its simplest and most universal form, — all the impelling force of the material world; and as it is received into various things, it puts on various forms, in accordance with the things in which it is and with their place and use in the universe, and has various appearances, and is called by various names, — as heat, light, actinic, magnetic, and other forces; and, in its most general form, and by its most general name, motion. These forces, as they are here in this world in which man begins life, or this natural world, are natural forces; they produce natural effects; they act in certain ways, or by certain methods, which have a considerable permanence and

uniformity; and as fast as we discover these methods, we call them *laws*,—laws of nature, or natural laws. They are, however, in fact, only the customary *methods* by which supernatural force operates and manifests itself when it comes down upon a natural plane, or into natural things.

All this while this Force is in God, and is put forth by Him, creating, sustaining and governing worlds and all things in them. In the heavens and through the angels it is putting forth a power that is exerted in forms and effects many of which it would be difficult for us to imagine. In this lower world it is whatever we recognize as force, or as causative or motive influence. And whenever there is a reason why this force operating in nature should manifest itself in a new and unusual effect, or should work by a new method, there is nothing whatever to prevent it from doing so. Always it is Divine force, directed by Divine wisdom, for the accomplishment of a Divine purpose. But it is, in itself, no more supernatural, when thus unusual in action or manifestation, than it was before. Always supernatural in its origin, and continuing to be supernatural while it remains above nature and works in the planes of existence which are above nature, it becomes natural force when it comes down into the planes of nature and operates there, whether by usual and recognized methods, or by new and unknown methods. Still, we may retain, in this connection, this use of the word supernatural, if we understand by it that a force always supernatural in essence and in origin, NOW so acts as to be seen to be the supernatural force which it always is in itself.

There are persons in whose minds every thing above the natural is so dead, that they *can* have no belief that any supernatural being or force exists. They may or may not be conscious of this. They may or may not say so to themselves, or to others. But, in point of fact, there is nothing in their minds which ought to be called *belief*, that existences or forces are in being or in operation, *other* than those which belong to

the visible world. If any evidence comes to them of some strange occurrence, they not only look first, as all persons should look, for an explanation of it in the recognized and customary forces or methods of nature; they not only say, what may always be justly said, that we are so ignorant of the extent or method of operation of natural forces, that if we knew more we might find the explanation sought; but they are wholly unable to go farther than this. They are wholly unable even to consider fairly the question, whether there be not here a *new* thing, involving a positive departure from the customary course of *old* things; a new thing, compelling the admission, either that it is effected by a new power, or that the old power was something very different from what they had supposed. To any *natural* explanation they are open. But evidence tending to exclude merely *natural* explanations, must seem, by the necessity of their own minds, not trustworthy. It is to them incredible, because it tends to prove the impossible.

But, whether it is believed, on the one hand, that there is nothing supernatural, or on the other, that the supernatural is abnormal and uncertain, and comes down as a stranger into the world of nature to disturb order, and violate law, and make its presence known by the only proof it can offer, which is this very disturbance and violation, all of this they who hold to the philosophy of the New Church must regard as erroneous. Not only are supernatural persons and forces positive and actual existences, but it is through them and by them that the natural world exists and is moved. Not only have all supernatural forces their own order and law, but it is their order and law which come down into nature, and cause and constitute all the order and all the law there are in nature.

There are few words used with so little propriety, or which, being misused, re-act so mischievously upon thought, as the phrase, "Laws of Nature." With all thinking persons, who

endeavor to understand the words they use, this phrase means, of course, nothing more than certain supposed uniformities in the order of succession, or in the co-existence, of external and cognizable phenomena. In the meaning they would give to the phrase, there is nothing of the first element of *law*. But, even to them, unconsciously, and to all who use the phrase without thought, it expresses and excites some idea of "Nature" as a law-making power, — blind it may be, and deaf, and dead, and always impersonal, — but as a kind of controlling power, which has laid down certain "laws," which all things that belong to "Nature" must obey.

If to persons so influenced by these words or this thought, a fact presents itself as a miracle, and as the effect and proof of supernatural agency and force *because* it is a miracle, the idea at once and necessarily in their minds is that of two conflicting powers. One of these is an old acquaintance; it is customary in its action, and orderly, and recognized. The other is a stranger, exceptional, without rule or limit, victorious by its greater power, and subduing for that time the opposition of nature. Whether they can either believe this, or not (to say nothing now about understanding it), depends upon the strength of their actual belief that "Nature" is somehow a legislating and a sovereign power.

Let us apply this to the greatest of all miracles, — the conception, by a virgin mother, of Jesus Christ.

Conception by means of the union of male and female parentage is the regular, established, and recognized course of nature, and of all nature. If there are among animals any *real* instances of births from virgins (parthenogenesis — the scientific name of what is sometimes supposed to be this — is not yet well understood nor proved to exist), they are far down on the lower planes of organized beings, and have no reference to man.

There are then two ways of considering this preternatural conception. There are some who say it is not true, because it

is not possible. It contradicts all the laws of nature. Such persons know nothing whatever which justifies them as rational persons in calling it possible; and therefore they say we cannot, as rational persons, inquire into the evidence which purports to prove an impossibility. If, however, they are willing to look at the evidence of this supernatural conception, and remember that it stands in opposition to evidence so strong as that of the laws of nature, they must then say that this evidence is not strong enough to justify belief.

But others have not this difficulty. They are not what the first class would call rational. They say, the Old Testament declares a virgin shall conceive; some of the Gospels say a virgin did conceive! Well, we believe it. It is a part of our religion, and an essential part; and we are not to be reasoned out of it by those who really know no more about these things than we do. And then this fact stands in their minds as an established fact; and it is useful to them: but it stands there as an abnormal, exceptional and astounding fact; as an exhibition of Omnipotent power, proving the presence and the action of that power, and its absolute control of nature; and giving supreme authority to the words and commands of the Being thus conceived.

There are these two ways of considering this greatest of miracles; but there is also a third way. If we begin with understanding that all life is derived from Divine life imparted to recipient forms; that God is our Father, and the Father of each one of us, not in a poetical, but in a most real sense; that a human father, himself living from our Divine Father, is an instrument of the Divine Father, by means of which the life of God, appropriated and qualified by the human father, may pass into a new being, or form, or germ, prepared to receive life; and that this new being grows into a man by the life then and so received from God, and constantly thereafter to be received from God; if we begin thus, we shall see that when Jesus Christ was conceived

of God, a peculiarity of the case consisted in this: the Divine life, which ordinarily flows into every human father, and becoming his life passes through him into the vital germ in the mother, here entered into the living germ in the virgin mother, without using the customary instrumentation.

And then the New Church goes on to tell us why. Not to bring completely within finite comprehension the mystery of mysteries,—for all conception is a great mystery, and this only the most mysterious of all,—but to tell us something of it: to tell us the work which was to be done by Him who was thus conceived; to show us that this infinite work of infinite love could not have been done, unless the germ of humanity within the mother could have within it a life not only Divine in its origin, but a life not limited and qualified by passing through a human father; to show us that, had it passed through a human father, it must have been appropriated by him; and from him it would pass as his life, with the character, defects and limitations of his life; to show us that the work which Jesus had to do could be done only if the life within were absolute and perfect in its own Divine power. And the more we know, and the better we understand what this work was, the more clearly we shall see that it could not have been wrought but by God working within a man, and in and through a human nature, but with perfect and irresistible power.

The miracles related in the Gospels were acts of Divine power, working by unusual means and agency. They were acts of the same power, which entering into the forms of nature becomes all the force of nature. They were not the acts of a new power, which for the most part keeps aloof from nature, and can operate in and on nature only by disorder; and they were acts in most respects analogous to the more common operations of the same power, differing only as the same purpose led at this time to the use of different means and methods.

It may be remarked, however, that there were then and always departures from the usual course of events, of a different kind, to which we may give or may not give the name of miracles. It has been already stated, that the material body lives only when animated by a living soul; and that the senses, powers and faculties of the living body are those of the soul within the body, using the bodily organs as instruments of the organs of the soul; and that this body, which is an instrumental medium between the soul and the material world, is also a barrier or obstruction between the soul and the spiritual world.

But the use of the material body, as an instrument, may be suspended even during our life here, and is suspended in some conditions or by some forms of weakness or disease; and then the soul has for the time no perception of, and no hold upon, the material world. So, too, the obstruction interposed by the material body to the recognition by the soul of the spiritual world, may be suspended; and then the soul, while within the body, sees, knows and uses the persons and things of the spiritual world, in much the same manner as if the soul were permanently released from the body by death.

This condition has occurred from time to time, with one person or another, in all ages. It has caused that belief in ghosts, visions and the like, which has been serviceable in keeping alive some belief in supernatural persons and things. Whenever a ghost or any spiritual scene has been perceived, it has been seen or heard by or through the spiritual organs, which are usually covered and closed by the material organs, but were then freed from this obstruction, or, in other words, opened. It takes place in various ways and in various degrees. It was the case with Swedenborg for many years almost continuously. Some instances are mentioned in the Gospels. Thus, when our Lord appeared to the disciples after the resurrection, He opened their spiritual eyes, that they might see Him, and their spiritual ears, that they might

hear Him; and in the case of Thomas, His spiritual touch, that he might feel Him. In this way the women saw the angels at the sepulchre; and wherever, in the Old or New Testaments, spiritual persons or objects are seen or heard (as by John in the Apocalypse), it is only by the spiritual senses and organs.

But they whose spiritual senses are thus opened, do not always or necessarily know it. Even if it seems to them that they see or hear strange things, it may not seem to them that they see or hear in a strange or a new way. In fact they do see, or hear, or touch, with the same spiritual eyes, or ears, or fingers, as before; but now these spiritual senses do not make use of material organs. Hence, too, many of those who, rising from the dead body, live only in the spiritual world, do not know, until they are told, that they have passed through death, and are in a spiritual world. For that world in its relations to the spiritual senses and organs, is so nearly what the material world is in relation to the material organs, that, at first, no difference is perceived.

As we include under the word "natural" all things, forces and faculties which belong to, or are needed for, and adapted to, the material body and the material world into which a man is born, it is obvious that by the development and use of all of these, a man may advance in his knowledge and his use of nature almost indefinitely, and all the while remain himself *natural*, or only that which he would be if he utterly died when the body died. They who are now in this condition of mind will not really believe, however they admit it in words, that he does not thus wholly die, but *must* live again in another world. Still less will they be able to believe (and there are few who seem to believe) that he lives in this world only to prepare to live in and for the other world; and that, for this very purpose, other faculties are given to him, adapted to this other purpose.

By the natural faculties he looks upon this lower world, understands it, uses it, and enjoys it. By the faculties which are higher than the natural faculties (whether we call them supernatural or spiritual), he looks inwards, upon his soul and its destiny; upwards, beyond nature to God; not to nature *as* God, but to God as other than nature, and as the Divine Person who creates, sustains and governs nature. He looks beyond time to eternity; beyond natural duty to spiritual duty; beyond natural truth to spiritual truth; beyond natural and transitory happiness to spiritual and abiding happiness.

If the natural faculties are not awakened and active, the man cannot live at all. If they only are awake and active, he will continue to live, although the higher faculties are never active: he will continue to live, as little more than a highly developed and cultivated animal, not only until death, but ever after. For he carries into the other life only natural desires, thoughts, and intelligence; and if such be his character, he will find there, as he finds here, a world in which he may be at home. He has no love for any thing within him which is higher than the natural; and therefore nothing higher than the natural has in him any life. For it is as easy to be *natural* in point of *character*, in the spiritual world as in the natural world. All our faculties higher than the natural are given us that we may prepare for the spiritual world. This does not mean that they are given us to prepare to enter into the spiritual world; for that we all do, all *must* do, all equally, at death; but that we may, through the unending cycles of eternal life, be good, wise, and happy. We *must* live in that world; but how we shall live there, what we shall be there, what use we will make while here of the powers and means given us that we may so prepare for that life that it shall be what it should be, are questions that are submitted to our own choice and our own freedom.

The essence of this preparation, or the whole of this preparation brought under one point of view, consists in the full, free, and loving acknowledgment of God. He is the Life of heaven. His own life, imparted to angels, and becoming the life of each as each one can receive it, is unperverted. The flow and current of this stream of Divine life constitutes the course of heavenly life. The inhabitants of heaven are those who know this, acknowledge it, perceive and feel it, and have unspeakable joy in this knowledge, and unspeakable gratitude for the love which gives this life to be their own actual life. These persons are *spiritual* in character. They have become that *for* which spiritual or supernatural faculties were given to them. They have, by the use of the powers and means provided, acquired that knowledge of God and that love of God, from which flows forth unselfish love of other men, as other children of the same Father. To reject wilfully these means of happiness, to refuse to make use of these higher faculties, to resist the influences by which our Father gives us the power to come thus to Him, is to be and remain natural, and only natural.

The essence of the difference between this natural man and this spiritual man lies not in the intellectual part of human character, but in the affectional. Every man loves what he has chosen to love: his love is that love which he has chosen to indulge and gratify and cultivate; for the power to choose and love the good or the evil is given to him, and always preserved, to the end that his own life may be most truly and actually his own. And yet the truth that man possesses, by the very constitution of his mind, this freedom and this choice, is itself a truth that is higher than natural truth; and therefore men who are only *natural* men deny it, and reason themselves as far as they can into the belief that even their choice and their love are either unreal, or are made for them by force of circumstances!

It is as easy to be natural as to be spiritual in the spiritual

world ; for there also, one who wills, loves and chooses *not* to believe in any God other than nature ; *not* to believe that revelations from Him teach what otherwise we could not know ; *not* to believe that it is they which tell us what is morally evil ; *not* to believe that we must shun all evils as sins against Him ; *not* to believe that we are by birth and nature prone to these evils, and can resist and put them away only by resisting self and becoming a new creature, through His influence ; — any one who wills, loves and chooses to believe none of these things, is in freedom there to reject them.

The denial of all truths of this kind proves that the man has nothing of belief, or opinion, or motive, or desire, or character, which he may not have by the exercise of the faculties given him that he may understand and make use of the body and the world into which he is born ; that is, by the exercise of the natural faculties. And when he passes into the spiritual world, and goes (as all do there) among his like, he may continue to love and to live as he has chosen to love and to live : he may continue to believe, that there are no higher faculties, and no higher happiness than that which may be attained by the use of the natural faculties. He goes there a purely natural man ; and he remains there a purely natural spirit.

It should, however, be distinctly stated and kept in remembrance, that this abiding naturalism of the mind is never caused merely by the *non-exercise* of faculties higher than the natural, or by the mere ignorance of the truth ; but only by the suppression of those higher faculties through the wilful and self-determined choice, and preference and exclusive love, of the natural. Hence, it is not the doom of any who die before adult life permitted this choice to come distinctly before them ; nor of those who for any reason never acquired in this life sufficient maturity of reason, whether through defect or disease of the brain, which while we live

on earth must be the organ of mental activity; or through the hinderance of circumstances, which covered them as with a veil through which the light of spiritual truth could not penetrate.

Within a few years there has been a vast increase in natural knowledge. It has come that it may be in readiness for the new spiritual and religious truths, which, it may be hoped, will before long lay hold of and make a fitting use of this knowledge. But how is it at present? Not only are more and greater facts discovered, but wonderful harmonies among them, waking responsive echoes which reveal relations never before imagined, and offering proofs of the most far-reaching and all-embracing design. It is, therefore, common to find scientific men, of the first rank, breaking out into expressions of delight and wonder, as these new truths are unfolded; of delight and wonder at the magnificence, the power, the order, and the harmony of — Nature! Sometimes the name of God is used; but is it often otherwise used than as another name for nature? We may be mistaken; we hope we are; but it seems to us that the name of God is often so used, as to indicate no thought of abandoning the love and worship of self for the love and worship of God; no desire to resist and abjure and put away the delicious pride in one's own intelligence as one's own in origin, and choosing in its stead the higher happiness of constant gratitude for the constant gift of God.

Of all the results of the rapidly growing knowledge of our time, no one is more certain, than that no imaginable amount of the knowledge of nature can prevent, or, *of itself*, has any tendency to prevent, naturalism in the mind, the heart, and the life.

But what is more, no knowledge and no certainty about the existence of a spiritual world compels the reception of truths which in their moral character are spiritual, or of a life in accordance with them. Modern spiritists, whether led

by illusion or fact, seem, for the most part, firmly to believe in a spiritual world. But, as far as can be judged from their writings and from what they say, their belief is wholly *natural* in its character. Their knowledge, or their belief, of a spiritual world, seems to confirm their naturalism, in the same way that *their* experience of that world would confirm it, after they were released from their bodies; and in the same way in which *their* experience may confirm it after death. A great poet has said, "Wait the great Teacher, Death!" But God, in whom and from whom is all truth, is the great Teacher, and the only Teacher. In all stages of our existence He is ready to teach us all that, without impairing our freedom, He can render us willing to learn. More than this we can learn nowhere and by no means; and least of all from Death.

The spiritual faculties of the soul, which are supernatural, are given us that we may stand with our feet upon naturalism, and lift our eyes to God. They may never awake; never begin to live, to move or act. But if they begin, the man begins to live a life *above* nature, above the natural. A new man is born within the former man. The spiritual man is born within the natural man. The man is regenerate; or again generated or begotten; or again born, a new creature.

And what follows? This also depends upon the man himself and his own choice. For the command, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," is the command of every day of our lives. So far as is compatible with the preservation of his freedom, he will be led by a most loving wisdom; he will be helped by the strength of an Almighty arm; but only so far. Therefore, this new creature, this tender and newly born spiritual man, may perish in its infancy. But if not, it is fed by all angelic influences, and led through conflict, suffering, and temptation, by the cloud when the undimmed radiance of day would be too bright, by fire when unrelieved

night would overwhelm him with darkness, — led into the fulness of “the stature of a man, that is, of an angel.”

But the very stirring of regenerate life in the heart is the recognition of the supernatural; not always by any use of that name, or even of the word spiritual; but by a recognition of the thing. This recognition may perhaps be dim, imperfect, almost unconscious; but it must be there. It must be a recognition of God, as the Father of our souls and the giver of all good; of the revelations which came from Him to teach us His will; of our duty and obligation to obey His revealed will; of the opposition between our natural disposition and His revealed will, and the necessity of overcoming this opposition by persistent endeavors; and of the worth of eternity as compared with the things and interests of this fleeting life. This recognition may be indeed obscure, confused, and incapable of analysis; but it must be there; and not until it is there, not until it begins to be living within the soul, is the spiritual man born and living.

This knowledge, this desire, is offered to all. Coming down from heaven, it seeks an entrance into every mind. But it enters, it can enter, only where there is a willingness to receive it.

The conclusion which we reach, the conclusion of most direct and important bearing upon the subject of this chapter, — the miracles of the Gospels, — is this. Where the *supernatural* faculties of the soul, and what we may call the supernatural interests of the soul, are not living and awake; where they have no influence upon belief, life or duty; where there is no actual belief of a God who is far above nature, and has given us His Word as a Sun to shine from Him in heaven down upon our natural life, — there *cannot* be any recognition of the supernatural in religion, or in science; or any explanation of any forces or any occurrences whether common or uncommon, customary or exceptional, by any reference to any thing that is more or other than nature.

Long ages ago it was said, "He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see Him, no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected of men." This was a prophecy concerning Him who was to be the Word made Flesh, and it is an everlasting truth concerning every mode and every degree in which Divine Wisdom offers itself to the natural man, that it may become in him his own human wisdom. He may accept the blessing, and permit it to lift his whole being from the ground. He may refuse it; and if unbelief and denial of the supernatural are fixed and indurated in him, he must reject it. For, to him it can have no form nor comeliness; and when he sees it, no beauty that he should desire it; it must be despised and rejected by him.

Therefore, such persons, however learned and intelligent in natural knowledge, or blameless in all external act, can have no actual belief in the existence or operation of a God, or of His ministers. They *cannot* believe the miracles. To them they must be, either falsities, or natural events. They cannot believe them in any honest, or religious, or useful way. For them the supernatural is nothing. In them it has no life, no influence, no instruction, for knowledge, for religion, for thought, or for life.

They cannot believe the miracles; and it is well for them that they cannot. It is of the mercy of the God whom they reject, that they are guarded from this belief. For if it were forced upon them, forced into minds which had no aptitude for it, and offered it no welcome, in the first moment of a recovered freedom they would reject the unwelcomed truth, and fall into deeper darkness and unhappiness. "They seeing see not; and hearing they hear not; neither do they understand; and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, by hearing ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their

eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should turn about, and I should heal them." — Matt. xiii. 15.

It is of His infinite love, that He does not heal, — it is of the perfect order of His infinite wisdom, that He cannot heal, — those whom He cannot make willing to be healed.

OF THE WORD MIRACLE.

The word "miracle" does not occur in our received translations of Matthew. It occurs once in Luke, xxiii. 8; and twice in Mark. In chap. vi. 52, it is in italics, showing that it was not in the original, but was supplied by the translators. In chap. ix. 39, where it is said, "For there is no man which shall *do a miracle* in my name, that can speak lightly of me," the phrase in the Greek is, "poiesei dunamin," literally, "do (or exert) power," the word there, and there only, translated miracle, meaning simply and precisely power or force. In John, this word occurs eleven times. It is always a translation of the Greek word "semeion," as it is in Luke xxiii.; and this word means simply and precisely a *sign*.

But this Greek word is very frequent in all the other Gospels; and is always in them (with the single exception in Luke) translated not by "miracle," but by "sign." As, Matthew xvi. 3, "Can ye not discern the *signs* of the times?" And in the next verse, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a *sign*, and there shall no *sign* be given unto it but the sign of the prophet Jonas." So, chap. xxiv. 24, it is said, false prophets shall show great "signs." And the same thing is said in Mark xiii. 22. So in the last chapter of Mark, verse 17: "These *signs* shall follow them that believe;" and three verses later, "The Lord, confirming the word with *signs* following." So in Luke xxi. 41, "And great *signs* should there be from heaven;" and in the 25th verse of the same chapter, "There shall be *signs* in the sun, moon and stars."

In all these instances, the word translated "sign" is the same word which in John is translated "miracle." In some of them it would read very strangely to us, if it were translated miracle, while in others it might as well be so translated as in John. And in the Gospel of John, the same word is sometimes translated "signs," as in chap. iv. 48, "Except ye see *signs* and miracles, ye will not believe;" (the word "miracle" being here a translation of another Greek word, scarcely used elsewhere, and meaning "wonder" or "miracle," which "semeion does not") and in chap. xx. 30, "And many other *signs* truly did Jesus;" chap. i. 18, "What *sign* showest thou us?" and chap. vi. 30, "What *sign* showest thou them?" In all of these instances there would seem no reason whatever why the word "*semeion*" should not be translated as it is elsewhere in this gospel, by the word *miracle*. Nor indeed have I been able to discover any reason which the translators had, or any principle which led them, to translate this same word in these different ways, not only in the different gospels, but in the same gospel. It may be said, "Why should not the word 'semeion' be translated as well by 'miracle' as by 'sign,' when they mean the same thing?" But they do not mean the same thing; nor should we think so, were we not accustomed to this use of the words; and it may well be doubted now, whether one who reads the gospels only in English, knows or supposes that when he reads the word "sign," and when he reads the word "miracle," he is reading the same word.

I have stated all this somewhat minutely, because it has a bearing upon the signification not only of the word "miracle," but upon the thing itself. A miracle has a twofold aspect; one is negative, and the other is positive. It presents its negative aspect, when we ask what it is not. It presents its positive aspect, when we ask what it is. We look at its negative aspect, when we regard it as not a thing which has ever happened before; or as an effect which has not been

produced before ; or as a thing which could not happen, or an effect which could not be produced, in the ordinary course of nature, or by the operation of any known forces of nature. We look at its positive aspect, when we regard it as significant ; as something which has taken place to indicate, or teach, or prove, some needed religious truth. Considered negatively, a miracle is a *wonder* ; considered positively, it is a *sign*.

The word miracle is one of the many words we have adopted from the Latin, and is but the English form of the word "*miraculum*," which is a substantive formed from a verb which means "to wonder at." We have seen, however, that the word, in the original Greek of the gospels, does not express the idea of wonder, but is exactly equivalent to "sign." In the Latin Vulgate it is translated "*signum*" (whence our word "sign"). Indiscriminately as these two words have been used, we cannot but think that the distinction between these two ideas, "wonderfulness" and "significance," is extremely important ; so important, that we have been led to regret that the word "*semeion*" was not translated by its exact equivalent, "sign," always in John ; as it is in four places in John, and wherever it occurs in the other gospels, with the exception of one instance in Luke. As we are unable to see the reason why the word "miracle" was used at all, so we have doubted whether more was not lost than gained by this mistranslation.

It is obvious that the belief in a miracle as "a wonder" may be absolute and unqualified, and yet be perfectly worthless. They who have no real belief in any thing but nature might, or rather must, regard it as wonderful only because the natural laws or forces which produce it are as yet unknown. It may be truly said that such persons do not really believe it to be "a wonder." But there is a way of believing that it is a wonder, which, to say the least, is not useful. We learn from the example of certain of the Jews, that it would be

possible for persons to consider the miracle as wholly preternatural, and then believe that the power beyond nature which produced it was far below nature—was infernal. There were some who, while witnessing the works of mercy of our Lord, could believe that he wrought them by the help of the prince of devils.

But without considering either of these extremes, it is obvious that any circumstance or event which was regarded only as “a wonder,” could excite in the mind only astonishment; and astonishment is not an emotion which must necessarily be useful, either to the understanding or to the affections.

Therefore, before a miracle can be useful, we must pass beyond a mere regard of it as something wonderful, and must hold it to be a “sign,”—to be significant; to have been wrought by a power that is more than nature and more than human, for the definite purpose of teaching or proving some religious truth. Then it may be very useful, indescribably useful; or it may be mischievous. And whether it shall be useful or otherwise, and if it be useful, whether it shall be so in a greater or a less degree, must depend upon what this “sign” is believed to signify, or upon the instruction or belief derived from it, or confirmed by it. Let us then turn to the miracles of Christianity, and, assuming the narratives to be true, endeavor to ascertain their significance.

THE MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION.

Of all these miracles, the greatest, as we have already said, was the birth of our Lord from a Virgin, who conceived from Jehovah. It was the greatest by every test, and in every sense. It not only preceded all the others in time, but may be said to imply and to account for them all. If we believe that the Lord God Almighty bowed the heavens and came down, and became the father of Jesus Christ in a way

and sense perfectly different from that in which He is the Father of all men, we have here the largest possible action of supernatural power, in, upon and through nature. It was itself a putting forth of infinite power, which implies that all farther or other exertion of that power may and will be made, which can promote the end for which this great fact itself took place. If we regard it as a miracle, it amply accounts for all the miracles which Christ wrought, because it accounts perfectly for His full possession of powers not limited by nature, and which nothing in nature could resist.

It is, however, as a "sign," that the greatness of this event is most important; for its significance is simply infinite. For of what is it a "sign"? The only answer must be, it was a sign that the infinite and eternal Father of all being came down to earth, and took upon himself the nature and form of man. Considered as signifying this, it includes, or implies, the whole work of Divine love and infinite power in leading men to heaven, and forever enlarging the number and the happiness of the angels.

On a far lower plane, and with direct reference to its immediate effects, this coming down of the Almighty to be born a man and walk among men, must indicate to every one who believes it, that the work thus initiated and prepared for was of corresponding magnitude. And while it is true, that whoever really believes the birth of our Lord from a virgin mother, as stated in the gospels, will believe and must believe that the gospels contain and are the Word of God, the converse of this statement is also true.

Whoever does not believe that our Lord has no human father does not believe the gospels.

In the first place this is so, for the simple reason that some of the gospels assert this supernatural birth as a fact.

But it is also true from the ground, and cause, and nature of this unbelief itself. Whoever calls himself a Christian, and accepts the gospels, and then explains away and denies

the statement concerning our Lord's birth, does so because its supernaturalness is to his mind proof that this event did not take place. He thinks it was not so, because it could not have been so. And he is right, unless there is a power other than nature, higher than nature, which concerns itself with the affairs of men, uncontrolled by nature. Nor could he, if he believed the gospels at all, deny that our Lord was born of a virgin, unless he really did not believe that there is any such power higher than nature; and this unbelief, therefore, is the ground of his unbelief of our Lord's Divine and miraculous parentage.

The reason why this unbelief, resting on this ground, is incompatible with a spiritual or religious belief of the gospels, is this. The whole instruction of the gospels terminates in and is included in the one truth, that man can become good, happy, and heavenly, only by the continued action of a supernatural power,—only by its entering and abiding in the man himself, and there doing for him a work which he could *not* do from himself, which he could *not* do by his natural powers;—which is in antagonism to his prevailing natural tendencies and propensities,—and which is not and cannot be done unless by the help of this supernatural power. This work cannot be done in those in whom a desire that it should be done cannot be kindled. When this desire exists, it brings with it some consciousness that the work desired is beyond their own strength, or, in other words, that it is a supernatural work, to be wrought only by supernatural aid; and this consciousness leads to some looking at the revelations which God has made as disclosing the means and methods of reform.

The eternal happiness of man arises from and is meant by his salvation from sin. He cannot be saved from sin by his own unassisted strength. He cannot be saved from sin, unless he, in his own freedom, co-operates with the Divine effort to save him. But this Divine effort was *most* put forth

in the miraculous conception, and was then and therein put forth in a manner which gives their greatest efficiency to all the other efforts of God for the salvation of man. To reject this, therefore, would seem to be the rejection of the centre and heart of all the Divine efforts for man. Such rejection must, therefore, make it difficult — we are far from saying impossible — for him who casts this truth away, to profit by, or to co-operate with, those other efforts which infinite Love is ever making to save us from our sins with our own consent.

THE FOUNDING OF CHRISTIANITY.

The next greatest miracle of Christianity is Christianity itself; or, the founding, the life, and the growth of the Christian Church.

Here, as always, by a miracle we mean a working of supernatural power by unusual means for religious instruction or religious influence. And in this as in all, the Divine working is so directed and so tempered as to do for man all that can be done, without destroying his freedom; and this freedom is always preserved, for the reason that when it is lost, nothing more can be done for the man's growth in goodness.

Hence, there is no miracle which *compels* conviction, and makes denial impossible. And therefore there have always been and always will be thinking persons, who, believing in nothing higher than nature, and in no powers higher than human powers, work out as well as they can the coming and the development of Christianity, as one in the series of events which successively appear in the evolution of the forces of nature.

It does not lie within our present purpose — which is to treat of the miracles related in the gospels — to consider the establishment of Christianity. We would, however, notice

the fact, that in these days efforts are made by men who, as far as we have any means of judging, are good and religious men, to explain and account for the wide reception of Christianity among the nations in the first centuries, by references to the condition of the religious faith of mankind, by peculiarities of external circumstances, and the apparent preparation for a ready acceptance of a new faith. The hindrances in the way, the violent conflict between Christianity and the world, the persecutions and perils of the early Christians, are admitted; but the attempt is made to show how these obstructions were overcome, and immense progress made in defiance of them, from natural and external causes. The error, or what we consider the error, lies, not in the investigation of these causes, nor in allowing them all their force; but in ignoring altogether the supernatural element, or the Divine assistance, which gave efficacy to those causes, and may be discovered by one who studies this history without closing his mind to the evidence and to the characteristics of this assistance. If these writers believed that Christianity itself is supernatural, if they believed that our Lord and His works were supernatural, it would seem that they might not have considered it unreasonable to suppose that the same supernatural agency was continued as long as was necessary, and was put forth in such forms and such degrees as were required, that the work begun by our Lord's life on earth should be accomplished and not defeated. It is a sign of the times that no definite acknowledgment of Providential action appears in the most recent writers on the early history of Christianity. So far as I know, we find it, since Neander, nowhere. Nor can I use the word "providential," and refrain from expressing that universal truth, without which history is an insoluble riddle, and life a burden, — the truth that every thing is providential; that all events are equally so, because all are absolutely and most actually so; that in every occurrence in the world's life and in the life of every man, are infinite love,

wisdom and power. All are always there, but not always equally visible; for there is a difference in the methods of this Divine action. For the most part our Father acts in customary ways and by customary means, in such wise as to leave to man that freedom of acting *from* God, but *of* himself, which is the foundation of human existence and personality, and permits us to "work out our own salvation;" and then He is withdrawn from the light of eyes so dim and veiled as our own. Sometimes, however, His guidance of events in history and in personal life is so obviously directed for a merciful purpose, that they who have not lost all knowledge of Him, see and acknowledge His providence in His work, and Him in it. And sometimes He puts forth His power in so new and strange a way, as to *force* a recognition of Him from all who have not obliterated in their minds all capacity of belief; and then we call it "a miracle." In the heavens they see, and know, at all times, His presence and His action; as we here see the sun at noonday, and feel its warmth, and rejoice in its light. And how much of the inconceivable happiness of heaven springs from this constant certainty, this undimmed perception!

THE BEGINNING OF MIRACLES.

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but thou hast kept the good wine until now.*

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. JOHN ii. 1-11.

The order of time in which the miracles of our Lord were performed is not clearly indicated. That above related was called "this beginning of miracles." It was so called, and was in fact an apt introduction to the rest, because it describes that change or work which is a necessary condition of every internal miracle; and because it contains within itself instruction concerning the one infinite end and purpose of all miracles. As a miracle is a direct exercise of the power of God for the purpose of teaching or suggesting spiritual truth, so this miracle which took place at the marriage in Cana in Galilee is the first miracle, because it describes and exhibits under the similitude of external events, this giving of spiritual truth, and the circumstances which make this giving possible.

To find this meaning there, we must of course go to the spiritual sense. The narrative relates a series of visible events. We ask of it to present to us a series of internal and spiritual events. We can do so if we believe that the external world, in the whole and in every part, corresponds to and represents that which is of the spirit; and if we farther believe that the Word of God is so called, because it consists of truth descending from Him, and through divine influence upon the agents employed embodied in such forms and statements, that this correspondence between the

natural and spiritual gives to the whole a natural sense, which is not always literally true, but which contains within it an entire, orderly and consistent spiritual sense.

There was a marriage. The marriage of a man with a woman represents the union of truth with good ; of wisdom with love ; or natural marriage represents spiritual marriage. And a spiritual marriage in the mind occurs when we love that which we know to be true ; for then the will and the understanding become one. The whole discipline of Providence consists, first, in teaching us that truth which is best adapted to lift us from our natural condition ; and next, in leading us to *love that truth*, and hate and leave the evils which it rebukes. Hence the sanctity of marriage ; and the frequent reference to it in the Bible as a very holy thing. When truth and love are thus united in the mind, we have within us that marriage which is meant by marriage in the Word, in the many places in which it is mentioned : this, or its exact opposite. And it is always easy to infer from the subject-matter and the context, whether the marriage is one of good to the truth it loves, or of evil to the falsity which inculcates or defends it. For there is a marriage, or something which simulates a marriage, between the evil and the false. And marriage, even if it have a good significance, is of many kinds. Of the character of the marriage mentioned in this miracle, we may judge from the indications. It took place in Cana in Galilee ; the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were invited there. Why are these things thus minutely related in the Word of God ?

At that time Palestine was under the dominion of Rome ; and Galilee formed its north-eastern province, lying between the Lake of Genesaret and the Mediterranean. It was populous and prosperous ; but its inhabitants were derived from many sources. Some of them were Jews ; but there were many from surrounding nations, among whom Egyptians, Arabians and Phenicians were especially numerous. The

Jews of Judea despised them, and the name by which the province was usually known was Galilee of the Gentiles. It was here that our Lord performed a very large part of his ministry, for the same reason probably which caused the first miracle to be performed there. He came then, as He comes again now, to establish a new church ; to establish it then, as now, among the ruins of a church which false doctrines have perverted and destroyed. And then as now, all spiritual truth must first be taught to them who are Gentile, in so far that they do not cling to the desolated church ; and yet to those Gentiles who are not without the limits of the Holy Land. And new and spiritual truth can be taught only to that part of our minds which is what Galilee denotes, in that it is in some degree free from the influence of the surrounding and prevailing falsities of a perverted church, and yet has not freed itself from these, by wandering far from the temple and making its abode in a country which knows not Zion.

The mother of Jesus was there. That mother, who embodied and represented all that was natural in man, and therefore could supply to our Lord a humanity adapted to the work he came to do. This work of regeneration requires as its first essential that the conduct be reformed, and the outer life made better by repentance and regeneration in act ; and therefore this external and natural basis of all life must be present in Galilee and at this marriage, if the work which the Lord ever strives to do, is then and there to be begun.

But Jesus and his disciples were called to this marriage ; and this is the conclusive, the indispensable condition. If He is called, he cometh. If He and his disciples or the truths and principles which serve him and promote his influence, are invited to the marriage in our minds of what we believe with what we love, conflict between the faith and the affections is about to cease, because they will become one. This is the effect of his influence. It is precisely what he is.

always endeavoring to do, and always does so far as we permit and desire. We must however desire it. We must invite Jesus and his disciples to this marriage. And then the mother of Jesus, or our human and external nature, will have a consciousness and a perception that spiritual truth is needed, and will go to him and tell him of the want. By "wine" is meant spiritual truth.

Already have we said more than once, that all things in this world are, and exist only because they are, correspondences and representatives of things of the spirit. Now there are three liquids frequently spoken of in the Word. They are water, wine, and oil. All represent and denote truth, or that which belongs to the understanding. But each represents its own class of truths and only that.

Perhaps as easy a way as any to illustrate this, is by saying that there are three ways in which a man may be good. One is, by obeying the truth from a mere principle of obedience to truth or law. Another and a higher is, by obeying the truth from a love of the truth, although the obedience is hard because the truth rebukes sins that are loved. The third and highest is by living the truth because it is loved, and the good which the truth expresses is loved, while the evils which it opposes are hated. There is then no labor in living thus; there is nothing but peace and happiness.

These three ways of being good are perfectly distinct, one from the other. They are founded in the nature of things, and beyond this; in the divine nature itself; and to one or the other of them all goodness must be referred.

Swedenborg gives to them the names of Natural good, Spiritual good, and Heavenly good, and we have already referred to this in treating of the spiritual world. Each of them has its appropriate truth. That is, there is a kind of truth which teaches and leads to natural good, and which they who are in natural goodness receive and comprehend;

so also there is spiritual truth, which teaches and leads to spiritual good; and so also there is heavenly truth, which teaches and leads to heavenly good.

It may be better to explain more fully the difference and relation between these, in connection with subsequent texts. Now only remarking that water is the general correspondent and representative of external or natural truth, or the truth which makes a man good by the principle of obedience; wine of spiritual truth, or the truth which makes a man good because he knows that truth tells him what is right, and he loves truth so well, that he will listen to its voice, at whatever cost; and oil of heavenly truth, or the truth which helps a man to be good, because it helps him to see more clearly the good which he loves above all things. Water, wine and oil are constantly referred to in this way and with this meaning, in the Bible.

The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. And Jesus saith unto her, What have I to do with thee? or, more literally translated, What is there to thee and to me? or, What is there which is common to thee and to me? This question is that in which the divine influence within us answers the earliest feeling of destitution of spiritual truth, which stirs in the beginning of regenerate life. It is prompted by the beginning of this new life within us; and it asks of our old nature, and of the habits and inclinations which compose it, What have they in common with the new life which we desire and seek?

But the good influence within does not stop there. After inspiring in us a consciousness that this destitution of spiritual truth springs from the opposition between our own regenerate nature and all goodness, it proceeds to point out that which will lessen this opposition, and begin to supply this destitution.

“And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews.”

It is the universal and perpetual offer of the Divine Providence to *purify* man, or cleanse him from his sins. All things which exist are his instruments for that infinite and eternal purpose. But by far the chief among these instruments is *a church*; for every church is founded and preserved in existence while it answers this very purpose, and is taken away from the earth, when it ceases to be able to effect this purpose.

There have been many churches on earth; and there are many now; and each has its own method of promoting the purpose which is common to them all; for each has its own "manner of purifying." Of all the churches which are or have been, the three most important are the Jewish, the Christian, and the New Jerusalem Church. And these are connected together, and stand in a regular sequence; and hold to each other the relation of natural, spiritual and heavenly.

The Jewish Scriptures command a perfectly good external life; and in general, the Jewish law in its literal sense was confined to external things. It was also sustained and enforced by external sanctions, as the terrors of war, captivity, disease, or death; and it was proved only by external evidence, as the miracles of Egypt, and of Sinai, and those which made evident the interposition of Omnipotence at different points of their history. In few words, it was a church of and for the external, natural man.

This was necessary, because this external nature of man must be cleansed from sin by repentance and reformation before there is any place or welcome or hope for any thing higher. Cease to do evil, and learn to do well, is the command. The first thing is the cessation from evil. And it is not more impossible for a man to take one step an hundred feet forward from where he now stands, than it is for him to step forward spiritually, unless there be the beginning, at least, of cessation from evil.

The Jewish law required this; but it required it by an

external or natural law. The ten commandments constitute this law, in one summary. What they demand is implicit obedience, and the avoidance of all evil conduct. When this is accomplished, or when there is a real beginning of this, with an earnest desire for its thorough fulfilment, then is the outer life "purified," and then is the man ready to look into the grounds of obedience, and to endeavor to avoid all internal sins, and seek after interior improvement.

As all things in the mind of man refer either to the will or the understanding, and each thing in its own way; so all the things in the external universe refer to and represent something of the will or something of the understanding, and this with infinite variety. The purifying vessels of the Jews were of stone, and stone represents in its own way natural and external truth; and they were filled only with and used only for water; only for the correspondent and representative of the truths which compose the law given to them and to all who would be taught how to begin to be good. He bade them fill the water-pots with water and they filled them to the brim.

They also who seek to obey his commandments, will, under his influence, fill them to the brim. They will amplify their meaning, and seek rather to enlarge than to diminish their scope. They will endeavor, not to save this or the other darling sin from their rebuke, but to bring all their errors and all their frailties within their cleansing influence. And then will Jesus convert this water into wine. The laws they have obeyed will no longer stand before them as merely external and natural commandments, but will be felt within them as internal and spiritual commandments. They will then seek not only to give these laws their widest scope, but to discern the light of their higher meaning.

There is scarcely any limit to the illustrations which may be given of these three degrees, because they are universal, and found in all things and all relations. The aspect of these

degrees presented by successive churches, to which allusions have already been made, is that which most concerns our present topic, and we will now endeavor to present this topic more fully.

There were many churches before the Jewish; succeeding each other through countless ages. Their characteristic qualities are referred to in the earlier chapters of Genesis, which, as a narrative of external historical events, are without literal truth, until the immediate ancestors of Abraham.

He was the progenitor of a great nation. His grandson removed to Egypt with his children, and there his descendants multiplied until they were called forth to journey through the desert to Palestine, and there to become a church. That is, a church was founded amongst them; and it was of most peculiar character.

In the first place, its commandments were more special and complete, and came down into all the duties and pleasures of life, as well as all the ceremonies of religion, in a degree which nothing elsewhere existing on earth at all approached. In a word, every thing the Jew was to do or be, was prescribed to him precisely.

In the second place, the evidence which sustained this dispensation was purely external, visible, tangible, and never to be mistaken. It was Sinai, with its sounds and sights of terror, and it was the blessing promised and given as far as it could be, and the curse threatened, and finally fulfilled throughout the ages. But neither hope nor fear was invited to look beyond the grave.

In the next place, its doctrines were purely external, or natural. So far as belief was concerned, it was but one doctrine; and that was the being, the perfection, and the absolute unity of God. But there was no instruction given concerning another life, and even the fact of this other life was not distinctly stated.

In all this, it represents exactly the *first*, or *natural* good-

ness within a man; for that is goodness of conduct only. This is the absolute essential of progress; it is the first step, without which there can be no second step; but it is itself, only a first step. And it may be goodness, or only the form of goodness; for that depends upon the motive within.

So the doctrine of faith is the first that gives light to the mind, when the spirit of God moves over the face of the waters and the darkness which lay upon them begins to be illuminated. The first day of the soul is described by the first clause of the perfect prayer; Our Father who art in heaven. Nothing more is known or believed; but this is enough to indicate, or rather to be, the first uprising of the sun of life.

The one characteristic of this church, as of this state, is *obedience*. There may be nothing more than this, but where this is not, there is nothing. Obedience is as absolutely necessary to all true religious life, whether of the highest or the lowest kind, as water is to natural life. And water corresponds to, represents and denotes the natural truth, or the literal commandments, which inculcate and guide obedience. And this is the water with which the water-pots of the Jews were filled to the brim, for *their manner of purification*.

After the Israelitish or Jewish church had passed through its various stages, it came to an end. There was need of a new church. Of one which should teach and require, and therefore should *reveal* a new degree of goodness, a new and higher state of mind to which man should aspire. To supply this need, the Christian church was established. This church is spiritual.

To understand the difference between a natural and a spiritual church, or between natural and spiritual goodness, we have but to consider that which has been already called the simple and universal law of all progress, first from evil to good, and then in goodness.

The first step, or rather the prerequisite to any step, is to

know and recognize the truth. The first actual step is obedience; obedience to truth or to a law; and this may come from that "fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom," or from any external motive of fear or of hope which Divine Providence has brought to bear upon the mind. By this obedience one acquires familiarity with the truth and its practical effect, and a knowledge of its power and operation, and thus is prepared to take the next step.

The second step is a conformity to the truth, from a love of the truth itself, or a reverence for its divine authority, and not from a mere regard to the consequences of obedience as rewards, or to the effects of disobedience as punishments. The truth is felt to be, sometimes, a hard master. It commands the resisting and putting away of tastes, habits, propensities and pleasures. It enters into conflict with the loves which still fill the heart. But it is stronger than they. The truth itself is listened to as the voice of our Father; a love for it begins, and even then it is stronger than the sins which it rebukes; and the truth is obeyed for its own sake, and these sins are resisted, not because they are not loved, but because the truth is loved more.

This is a step far in advance of the former. New qualities and powers of the mind and heart are called into activity. Emotions unknown before, fill the soul with happiness, even in the midst of conflict and self-compulsion. And the sense of this is sometimes so powerful, that it leads the man to the extreme of self-renunciation, and, for the moment, rewards with ecstasy the sacrifices of a mistaken asceticism.

It is obvious, that this state of mind asks only to be certain of what is truth, and needs not that the proof should come with terror or enticement. Hence, the revelations of this church were not founded upon the earthly blessing or curse, the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey or the threat of plague and devastation; but upon miracles, or "signs," which, without promise or threat, only *taught* and

proved. "Believe me," said our Lord, "for my works' sake." And thus was illustrated the law of Divine Providence, that the very evidence which is appropriate in effect and character to the class of truths which it substantiates, is provided with perfect adaptation by divine wisdom.

We may observe also the difference in the truths taught, as well as in the evidence of those truths. Where the purpose is only external obedience, the truths command only external conduct; but when the purpose rises to internal obedience, the truths rise also and command internal obedience.

Our Lord said, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her committeth adultery with her already in his heart." So the command not to kill, rose into the command not to be angry; the command not to forswear one's self, rose into the prohibition against any swearing, by which is meant that if any thing is needed to confirm and attest a simple affirmation, this "cometh of evil," because if there were no falsehood, nothing more than yea, yea, or nay, nay, would ever be thought of. So the command of exact justice in retaliation, or an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, rose into a command to put all vengeance so utterly away, as to resist not those who would take from us. And then, to consummate this change, the command to love the neighbor rose into the command to love one's enemies; or to have no enemies, but to love as our neighbors and brethren all the children of our common Father, who maketh his sun to rise, and his rain to fall on all alike, because He loves all. And whenever we find the phrase "Ye have heard of them of old time" followed by the phrase "But I say unto you," we read of the elevation of the natural into the spiritual; of the water of the former dispensation made into the wine of the Gospel.

So also the whole Jewish religion rose into the whole

Christian religion; so all the water of purification of the Jewish church was changed into the wine of the Christian church; and so our Lord, in his first miracle, as it was wrought in his lowest kingdom, the material world, indicated, prefigured, and prophesied that which was the purpose and effect of all His words and all His works.

When near the close of His earthly life, at His last supper with His disciples, He gave them bread and wine as His flesh and His blood. The wine was still that spiritual truth which He came to give; and He instituted that solemn sacrament at that solemn hour, because He was about to set the seal of His death to His covenant with men.

We have said that there are three kinds of goodness, and of appropriate truths, following in orderly succession, and that the three liquids, water, wine and oil, correspond to and represent them. They are natural, spiritual, and heavenly goodness and truth. Of the first two, and of the churches which rest on the revelation of these two classes of truths, I have spoken. Of the third, it will be better to speak more fully, in explanation of other words, or other works of our Lord; and here only briefly.

As obedience to truth, if it be sincere, is followed by a love for the truth itself, so this love, if it be sincere, and indulged and invigorated, prepares the way for a love of the good itself which the truth requires. In other words, if one, from a sincere love of the truth, persistently denies all indulgences of the evils which the truth rebukes,—the pain of this denial will gradually cease, the love of these evils will grow weak and faint, and at length will die, and the opposite love of that good which the truth inculcates will come into and possess the soul, and the last and highest kind of goodness, that which may indeed be called heavenly good, will be established in the mind.

The church, by means of which Divine Providence would establish this good in the mind and in the life of mankind, is

that which we call the church of the New Jerusalem. And every thing which has been said of the relation of the two former churches to each other may now be said, emphatically, of this. Let us now look at this, first in reference to the new motives or affections which are proper to this new church and distinguish it from those which have preceded it. Next, as to the new truths and doctrines proper to it. Then, as to the evidence which is appropriate as the proof and foundation of this and was not so of the others. And lastly, of one aspect which was not presented before, because it needed for its illustration that all three of these churches should be considered together. We refer to that mutual necessity which makes the second imply, require, and rest upon the first, historically, on the earth, and internally in the mind; and the third imply, require, and rest upon the first and second, both in the history of man and in the life of his soul.

If we can imagine a church which addresses itself to, and founds itself upon, the love of goodness, we shall see at once that there is no room here for the motives which have operated during the ascent hither. The hope of reward and the fear of punishment, whether in this world or in another, are no longer needed. In the beginning, evil was resisted and overcome, under the influence of powerful external motives. In the next and higher state of mind, a deeper evil was resisted and overcome, by the help of a purer motive; by the elevating and supporting strength of a love of the truth, and a perception of its excellence, its beauty, and its safety. But now there is to be a hatred of what is evil, and a love of what is good. The intellectual is no longer to lead the affectional upwards, and sustain its feeble footsteps as it climbs the difficult ascent; for that has been done. Now, the affectional is dominant, and the ruling love being a love of good, it resists, suppresses, and removes all conflicting loves of evil as a sovereign assails and subdues rebels; or, better, as a healthy organism detects and casts off the seeds of pain and disease.

It is equally obvious that the evidence demanded for this is totally different from that which was appropriate before. When the operative motive was hope or fear, the adequate evidence was that of attraction or of terror, or that which appealed to hope or to fear, as did all the evidence belonging to the Jewish dispensation. When the operative motive became a love of truth, no other evidence was wanted for this, and none could reach this, but that which proved the authority of the teacher ; that miraculous testimony which overpowers doubt, and by proving His divine origin and power, proved the divine origin and power of the truths He revealed. This was the evidence then given by the Lord. "Believe me for my works' sake," He said and says to those who could believe on these grounds, and could not on any other ; and they did and do believe Him.

But the Jews, as a nation, did not believe him. They had not ascended above the Jewish state of mind, or quality, or faculty. They demanded such evidence as had attended the foundation of their own church. The reason was, that nothing else was to them evidence, and nothing else could supply them with motive. But this kind of evidence was not given to them. In one sense, it could not have been given. Doubtless omnipotence might have arrayed the truth then descending from heaven, with all the terrors, all the charms, and all the proof which men could ask or imagine. But if such evidence had been given to those minds who could believe truth only on this evidence, in proof of higher truth than was suited to their minds, they would have sunk this truth down to their own state. If they heard, and believed the words of the Lord on this evidence, the same state of mind which required this evidence, and could not believe on any other, could have perceived in the truths nothing but what suited that state of mind, or would very soon and very certainly have lowered those truths down to its own quality, by interpretation or falsification. Therefore such evidence

was withheld ; for it was a mercy to withhold it from them, who could only thus abuse it.

The very same thing is true this day ; for the same law continues, and must produce the same effects.

The truth now given as the light of a new church is not given, and cannot be given, to those who do not seek it and receive it and love it, for the sake of the good to which it leads. And of this there can be no external evidence. If a man has an earnest desire to make certain machinery for a certain end, and is trying to learn how, the test to which he submits the truth or instruction he gets for the purpose, is its adaptation to that end ; the question he asks is, Will it do that work ? If he sees or believes that it leads to that result, and that when applied to practice, it will bring out and accomplish that purpose, he takes it, and otherwise he rejects it ; and it does not occur to him that he can take it or reject it on any other ground. Precisely so is it with them who thirst for truth that it may make them better. All the evidence that is possible or imaginable would be lost on them, if it was not evidence that this truth, if applied to the affections and to the life would make them better. All evidence that is possible for them is the evidence of their own perception and consciousness, assisted perhaps by that derived from observing how the affections and the life of others are affected by a belief in those truths.

We repeat, that other evidence of this truth would be impossible. If we suppose it written in letters of fire upon the sky, if the stars in their courses formed themselves into the words that told it, so that the mind was completely overwhelmed and denial made impossible, yet, if there were no earnest desire for the good which that truth taught and brought within reach, it is obvious that the assent of the understanding itself would be unreal ; it would be verbal only ; or rather silence only. It would be an enforced absence of denial, and not a reception of the truth. And if by any

such means, or by any means, those who could not love these truths were made to receive them intellectually, it is plain that they would soon falsify, misunderstand, and abuse them. And to prevent this misery, a merciful providence offers these truths in such a way, that they come invitingly to those who desire them in a deep consciousness of their moral and spiritual need and an earnest desire of moral and spiritual improvement; while these truths bring with them to others repulsion and difficulty. And they who reject this truth because it does not come with the evidence and sanction which attended earlier and lower dispensations, are, in one respect, prudent: they reject that which could do them no good, and they reject it for a reason which proves that it could do them no good.

Let it not be supposed from this, that they who receive the doctrines of the new church are, or believe themselves to be, necessarily better than others. In the first place, there is such a thing as a merely intellectual reception of the truth, and of a delight in it merely as truth. Perhaps this kind of reception is the beginning of all reception with most persons. And with some, it is the beginning and the end. But an intellectual reception which does not lead to and is not the means of a deeper and better reception, profiteth little.

Moreover, those who receive these doctrines are not to be discriminated from those who do not, as good men on the one side and bad men on the other. From their peculiar tendencies and qualities, perhaps from the feeble hold upon them of other doctrines, or from surrounding circumstances, they are persons to whom they may be offered, and who may be made better by them. They may need more help against themselves than others do; and to them they are offered by the same wise goodness which offers to every one that which he most needs and which may be most useful to him.

Nor can it be doubted, that there are very many in all the regions of the earth, who, by the opportunities, the instruction and the discipline, which are afforded them, are enabled, —

not to receive these doctrines in this life, — but prepared to receive them hereafter with joy and gladness. It is to be known, — although we can now only state the fact, and not attempt to offer illustration of it, — that all these degrees of truth exist in all dispensations. They among the Jews who were capable of loving truth for its own sake, found the truth they loved. And they who loved the good this truth taught, found it coming down to them from heaven. So it has always been, and so is it now in all dispensations, or all churches, and so is it now in the old or first Christian Church. For churches are discriminated from each other, not by the limitation to any one of them of any one degree of love or life; but by the predominance and fulness of that degree of truth or love, which gives its prevailing character to that church and to its influence.

It is not difficult to see the order of ascents in the three kinds of evidence, and in the three states of mind to which they appeal. In the beginning, when first awakening from the dream of sin and sensuality, a man will be helped by urgent terror or by hope of that external kind which he can then appreciate. But he cannot make much progress in renouncing sinful indulgence even on this ground, before glimpses of the beauty of truth visit his opening eye, and he begins to see how right it is, and how wise it is, to sell all things and buy this pearl of truth. And then, if he goes on, he will become able to discern, and feel in his inmost heart, that truth is but the body of a better thing. The good within it now seems to him to give to it all its charm and all its worth. And when, from loving truth for its own sake and good for the sake of truth, he arises to the love of good for its own sake and of truth for the sake of good, he has taken the last ascending step.

But if even this statement of the degrees of evidence and of truth seems obscure, let me say in all simplicity, that a reception of the truth from the influence of threat or promise,

is a lower reception than one which rests on external evidence that it *is* truth, but does not appeal only to fear or hope; and that this is again lower than a reception of truth on the evidence of its own light and its own influence and effect, and the perception that it teaches how to be good. Surely there are none who cannot understand this.

The evidence on which this church rests, which is now in its beginning, is of this last description. It consists in part of the answers which it gives to him who longs to find order in the apparent disorder of the world, and to quell the inward disorder of which he is conscious. If the cares or pleasures of life absorb the attention, there is not enough of thought about the destiny or the duty of man or the providence of God, to discern even the clouds which environ these great subjects. A mind in this condition would not desire, nor use, nor comprehend the truth which dispersed these clouds or made them luminous. If there is contentment with self and with one's own goodness, how can that truth be welcomed, which begins with the declaration that one's self-derived goodness is not good, and from beginning to end has but one purpose, and that is a change of the whole heart? If there is not one cordial and living recognition of God in the soul, what room is there for the truth which declares that His life is within all life, His divine truth within all law, His love and wisdom in all creation as the elements of its being, clothing themselves in all its forms and forces, and eternally seeking to restore all things to unity among themselves and harmony with Him?

If it be true that the truths of the New Church form one vast system, which penetrates every corner not only of being, but of thought, emotion, duty or hope, bearing with it new light, inspiring new motives, demanding new affections, and filling the whole man with new life, and new love towards all whom it declares to be children of the same Father, — it must be obvious that where this is not desired, by no possibility

could any part of this truth be received, or if received, preserved. It might be assented to intellectually; it would be possible that proof of it might be so forced upon the mind that there could be no denial. But even then there could be no real reception or incorporation with the understanding where there was no desire in the heart for the proper effects of this truth.

On the other hand, where this desire existed, if truth was revealed which possessed the power and did the work we have ascribed to it, a mind which perceived and desired this, even imperfectly and as it were only in its beginning, could no more ask for evidence, than a healthy and open eye would ask for proof of the existence of the sun in whose light and warmth it rejoiced.

We might have expected therefore what we see, and that is a repetition of a circumstance which was very obvious in the beginning of Christianity. There was then also, a constant and apparently a sincere demand for evidence; and indeed a universal and passionate desire for *that* Messiah whom they expected. We wonder that such a cry for proof that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, could be heard in the midst of that array of convincing miracles. But they who demanded evidence, wanted *other* evidence; they wanted evidence different in kind; they wanted something like that which had been given to their fathers; something appropriate to the state of mind which they had inherited from their fathers; something of what such a Messiah as they desired and expected would have brought with him. But this could not be given them, because it would not have been appropriate to the truth then revealed.

In the very same way there are those now who say, sometimes with sincerity and fervor, Very glad should we be if we could believe Swedenborg, but we cannot and we ought not unless he offers us that miraculous attestation which is the distinctive proof of a divine revelation. And they *may* be

right. Perhaps *they cannot* believe without *that* evidence ; and they cannot believe *this* truth, for it is of a different order, and is apprehensible only by minds of another class or state ; only by minds which, while they need reform and purification quite as much as others, or it may be more, can best be led to it in this way. In other words, the universal law by force of which truths of any especial kind or order can be verified only by evidence of the same kind or order, a law recognized in all the branches of science, and indeed through all the departments of human inquiry, applies here also.

In dealing with that opening miracle which introduced the whole Christian dispensation by showing how that dispensation converts into its own wine the Jewish water of purification, we have anticipated somewhat, in speaking of that completion of the Christian dispensation, in which its wine of truth should be converted into the oil of good and of gladness. But it seemed well to do this, because neither of these dispensations can be understood without the other. Each of them implies the other. The lower contains the higher ; the higher rests upon the lower. By this we mean, that obedience is of no value, if there be not within it some love of the truth, and some love of good to which the truth leads, although at present they do not reign, but require external help to produce obedience. So the love of truth, although it be manifested only in that form, must have within some love of good, or it is barren and dead. And on the other hand, no love of goodness is sound and healthy, if it does not love and promptly and fully receive and obey the truth that points out the way to goodness.

When the love of truth is established in the mind, the outward proof is a new and more perfect obedience. And when the love of truth has ripened into the love of good, then the love of truth acquires new life, and obedience to the truth has a readiness, a fulness, and a gladness never imagined

before. Infinitely removed therefore from the truth is that error which supposes that either of these dispensations wholly supersedes that which went before. On the contrary that which came later embraces that which came before, and vivifies it, and rests for ever firmly planted upon it as upon its own proper foundation.

It was this error which our Lord rebuked, not for that time only, but for all time, when he said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law." And elsewhere, when we reach these words and others of similar meaning, we shall have opportunity to show more fully, that obedience, simple, unqualified, undoubting and unresisting obedience to the laws of God, is the first and the last proof of all love of goodness, and the eternal foundation upon which all goodness of the will or the understanding, of affection or of truth, must for ever rest.

The results which we have reached may be compressed into the following statement :—

Every man has in him the elements and possibility of natural, spiritual and heavenly life. The Israelites, as a nation, were eminently and almost only natural ; and to them was given a scripture which addresses itself in its literal sense mainly to the natural man. And it was given to them not for themselves only, but for all men in all ages, because in all men this natural man must be the basis of the whole character.

This scripture prophesies of something more, and of one who should teach something more. So all religious truth, if religiously received by the natural man, inspires in him a hope and aspiration for something more and higher.

But this higher revelation can only be born when the spirit of God descends upon the natural man and impregnates it with divine life. And when it is born, it wears the form and aspect of its natural parent, and must be baptized with water or cleansed in its external by natural truth, and only

gradually, and through temptation, conflict and victory, are the things in this natural element which oppose the divine, overcome and removed, and the natural life thus purified is infilled and glorified with divine life.

The indispensable condition of this progress is, that the natural should be converted into the spiritual. However slowly, and imperfectly or slightly this is done, excepting where it is done in some way and in some measure, or, to express this truth in scripture forms, excepting where something of good is married to its appropriate truth in the Galilee of the mind, and at that marriage the water in the vessels of purification after the manner of the Jews is converted and spiritualized, the first step is not taken towards the elevation of the natural man above natural goodness.

OF THE MIRACLES OF CURE.

There follows in the order of time that which is called "the Second Miracle which Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee."

It was the healing of the son of a nobleman. The sick child lay at Capernaum. But the miracle took place, or rather the supernatural exercise of a healing power took place, at "Cana of Galilee where he made the water wine." It was thence the father came to Jesus, beseeching him, "that he would come down to heal his son, for he was at the point of death."

It may be well to consider together all the miracles of cure which our Lord wrought. Of some of them we may speak specifically; but before doing so some general remarks may be made which are applicable to all. And the general result which we shall reach is, that in these miracles as in all His life on earth, our Lord was doing only that which he is always doing.

What is health, and what is sickness, and what is cure?

The words which are most commonly used to express sickness, are disease, and disorder; and both are significant. When life is received without impediment or obstruction into the spiritual body, and through that flows into and animates the natural body, there is a sense of joy in the mere consciousness of life. The whole man is at ease. There is happiness without the specific gratification of any desire, and indeed with no specific cause to which it can be referred. All men may remember states like this in their childhood, for there must have been moments at least, when gladness and deep joy were felt, with no endeavor and no ability to ascribe them to any particular event. In maturer life, these states, if they occur, are more rare; because the absence of impediment and obstruction to the reception and flow of life is seldom so entire. But when this obstruction is much increased, the man is no longer "at ease;" life becomes difficult and not easy; and there is a distinct sense of *dis-ease* or the opposite of ease.

So too this reception and flow of life can only take place when the two organisms, spiritual and natural, which receive and feel life, are, each in itself, in a condition of order, and also in orderly harmony and relation. For if they are, or if either of them is, not in this order, there is then an instinctive sense of *disorder*; and sickness, of some kind or degree, takes place. We may thus see what health is; and what the opposite of health, or sickness, is; and may infer that cure must consist in removing the obstructions and impediments to health, and invigorating the influences which restore health. Sickness, or disease, or disorder, may come in either of three ways. The spiritual body may be out of order, or the natural body may be out of order; or both may be so.

Whichever of these may be the form of the sickness, the essence of it is always the same. Influential life is not received as it should be, and does not flow down and forth as it should flow.

The causes of disease may operate directly upon the spiritual body, or upon the natural body. It is probable that they operate sometimes, in these and in all ages, directly upon the spiritual body ; but far less so now than in the time of our Lord's coming. When such causes operate in such a way, they must operate through those who live in the spiritual world. And when they operate thus with peculiar force, it is because these evil spirits have peculiar dominion over the spiritual body, and through that over the natural body ; or, over the whole man. Such cases constitute those instances of demoniac possession which are recorded in the gospels.

It is rather a fashion now to consider those cases as only exaggerated and metaphorical descriptions of severe ailments of body or mind. There is as much truth in this view as may be expressed by the law, that all sickness springs from the action of spiritual causes and spiritual beings. But it is also true that these causes may operate far more directly, and with far greater power in some cases than in others.

It is probable that now, the very great majority of cases of sickness occur from the operation of spiritual causes through natural means ; and they who have no knowledge or belief of spiritual existences or spiritual causes would ascribe them to natural causes only. Of the recorded miracles of cure of our Lord, twenty in number (many of which are of more than one person), one-fourth only are described as the casting out of demons. Of the others, many are spoken of as we should speak of well-known diseases now ; as fever, leprosy, paralysis, blindness, deafness, dumbness, withered or powerless limbs. Of such cases, the vast majority were then, as they are now, caused *through* natural means. If a man take a poisonous drug he sickens. So he may if he inhale poisonous miasma in the air ; or indulge in gluttony, or any lust. And he may suffer from such causes at once, or only after long delay. Or he may store up tendencies to disease in

his constitution, and give them to his children, to break out in some distant generation.

Of all these diseases, whatever may be their forms, or names, or however they be caused, amid this infinite diversity there is one certainty. If there be cure and recovery, this cure is effected by the life within. However physicians may vary in their theories or their practice, and whether they hold that medicine can only remove impediments and permit this inward force to operate, or that suitable medicines will co-operate with and strengthen this inward force, all must agree, that if this force be absent or inactive, there can be no cure. Another thing is perhaps equally certain. It is, that so long as life exists, it endeavors to cure. Cases of sudden death, from wounds, from active poison, or lesions of a vital organ, may form apparent and perhaps real exceptions. But they are only exceptions to the law. And it seems now to be generally admitted, that the active and painful symptoms of disease do usually indicate and exhibit the efforts of this inward force to remove disease.

It is the custom to call this inward and curative force "nature;" and this is the word which one finds in almost all books which treat of cure. The word, so used, means very little, and is therefore a good word if there be very little meaning to express.

But it is not "nature" which cures; for it is God who cures. It is the life of God imparted to man, which cures. It is his life, which, flowing into man and received by man, becomes man's life. It is all the life the man has; and it does all the work which all the life of man can do.

The divine life forms and fills the spiritual or internal body, and through that forms and fills the natural, or material or external body, as long as the internal body remains within and connected with it. The perpetual effort of this divine life is, to bring the spiritual body into order and keep it in order; and through it to bring the natural body into order

and keep it in order. But this effort is always subordinated to the constant and universal purpose of the Lord, which is to respect and preserve the freedom of man, and, *through that freedom* do him good. Out of this law, or limitation, or necessity, grows another law; or rather, in conformity and harmony with this law, another law co-exists and co-operates. It is, that when mischiefs of all kinds flow from the abuse of this freedom, they are resisted, overcome, suppressed and removed by the life within, just so far and no farther, as the *whole good* of the individual—the good that includes eternity as well as time—requires and permits.

If an accident befalls a man,—as for example, a fatal wound,—which makes it impossible that he should live longer on earth, it does not befall him because the providence of God was absent or ineffectual. If he dies of disease, it was not because the power of God to heal was wanting; but because in these instances the divine power was directed by the love which desired the best good of the man, and by the wisdom which saw the whole being of the man, and knew what that good required.

But if the wounded man be healed, or if the sick man recover, it is only because the life within, or divine power, filling and acting through the life of the man, was able to accomplish its divine endeavor, in conformity with the divine purposes and the divine order.

If one lies down with fever, there is a conflict within him between life and that which resists life. If he have leprosy, the life within casts the disease to the surface, and would remove it if it could under the limitations above stated. If he be paralyzed, the life within endeavors to restore to the body its capacity of obedience and usefulness. If he be blind, or deaf, or dumb, or have a withered or an impotent limb, the life within, which built and animates all organs, endeavors to restore that which suffers to its orderly condition.

The question in any case whether the man shall recover,

or remain ill, or grow more sick and die, is always and only the question, whether between these conflicting forces, the curative and restorative force of life shall be the stronger or the weaker.

Now this life is, as we have said again and again, the Lord's life in us ; is the Lord in us ; and therefore it might have been said as well, or better, that if the man be wounded and healed, or sick and recover, or powerless in some organ and restored, it is the Lord within him who does this work of restoration. And He does it by the invigoration of the curative and restorative powers of the life which flowing from Him is then in the man as the man's life.

This is precisely what our Lord did in the miraculous cures which He wrought while walking among men in His assumed humanity ; but in an unusual way, because for an unusual purpose.

They were done to show to men what He is always doing ; to tell them what cure and restoration are and whence they come. They were "miracles," because they were things which He did then only, in that way ; but they were "signs" because they were things which He is always doing, and did then, under such circumstances, in such a way, and to such an extent, as to excite not only their admiration, or wonder, but their recognition of Him and His power.

Precisely the same thing may be said of the instances in which our Lord restored the dead to life. They were three ; the widow's son at Nain, the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus.

Modern rationalism, which is not willing to declare its unbelief in the Gospels, or, perhaps is desirous to believe them if it can do so in its own way, sometimes calls these "cases of suspended animation." And one argument for this is founded upon our Lord's words about the daughter of Jairus, "Weep not ; she is not dead, but sleepeth ;" and of Lazarus, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth ; but I go that I may awake

him out of sleep." It should however be remembered, that it is added immediately after, "Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead."

They may all have been only cases of "suspended animation;" but what then?

Swedenborg tells us,—and upon this point we defer implicitly to his authority,—that death is usually not complete and absolute until some time after apparent death. Death is sleep; both the spiritual body and the natural body sleep; the natural body does not wake; but the spiritual body wakes and is assisted by angels to leave the natural body, which continues to sleep until the spiritual body leaves it and then dies. But this does not occur until all inward vital action has completely ceased, for while the action of life continues there is life within. And the soul does not leave the body, usually, until about the third day from apparent death. It is about the third day that,—to use a phrase I have heard from persons accustomed to be employed about the dead,—“the flesh sets.” It is now often stated in medical books, that the seeming dead should not be buried until this rigor is established, because it is the best if not the only certain evidence of actual and total death. And all who are accustomed to observe the dead, and know how often the face assumes at once an expression of glad repose, know how soon this passes away.

Cases of suspended animation are very common. Every fainting fit may be regarded as one; and it often occurs in cases of suffocation, and comes and remains in some cases of that undefined and not understood condition which is called trance. The instances in which persons about to be buried have revived prove that life may remain, and be capable of return, for some time after every common indication of its presence or action has passed away.

It is called suspended animation if the person revives; death, if he does not. But if he revives, why, how, does

he revive? Because the life within, the human life within, which in its origin and essence is divine life, resumes its sway over the natural body. Perhaps no man ever died of sickness, when precisely this thing might not have happened, in one stage of the disease; or when the life within might not have been so invigorated from its divine source, as to animate with new force the natural body, and slowly or rapidly, according to the condition of that body, heal its sickness, and enable it to resume all its functions. We do not mean to say, that in the case of Lazarus, for example, the soul had not left the body and was recalled to it; or that this may not have happened in some of the cases of what are called "suspended animation." We know not how this matter is. But we believe that whoever faints away and seems to die, and revives, is restored to life by our Lord, just as much by an exercise of His power, as was Lazarus; but not in the same way and under the same circumstances. For it must not be supposed, for a moment, that the views here presented, derogate from the worth or diminish the influence of the miracles of our Lord. They were works of Divine Power; they were "signs" of the putting forth of this power; they were works intended to make this Power manifest; and they did, and they do, make this Power manifest; make it manifest to those to whom it is not manifest in its constant and customary action.

They were and are addressed, in their outward form and significance to those whose way of thinking, and feeling, and living, was and is outward; to them in whom the external capacities of the soul are awakened, and who are influenced by such things only as those external capacities can apprehend.

Such persons are accustomed to the rising and setting sun; to the birth, the growth, the sickness and the death of men; to all the ordinary course of human and worldly events. Because so accustomed, there grows up in them, consciously or unconsciously, the feeling that these things take care of them-

selves ; that they go on in a certain way, because that is the way of their going on ; and they do not, and perhaps cannot, look through these effects to their causes, nor through these causes to their cause. And for them this “ custom ” is broken by a “ miracle ” in a way which startles, and rouses, and instructs them. Let me quote what Cowper says :—

“ What prodigies can power divine perform
More grand than it produces year by year,
And all in sight of inattentive man !
All we behold is miracle ; but seen
So dully all is miracle in vain.
From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
Is nature’s progress when she lectures man
In heavenly truth ; evincing as she makes
All her transitions, that there lives and works
A Soul in all things, — and that soul is God.”

They who cannot see this, then constituted and now constitute a majority of mankind ; a majority which can be diminished only very slowly ; and will cease to be a majority only in a distant period. And these miracles are recorded, that they may for ever remain as a testimony for such minds.

Our Lord said, Believe me “ for the works’ sake.” Nor did he say it in vain. In that age, and in every succeeding age, this miraculous testimony has undoubtedly carried to many minds the conviction that it was intended to carry.

But there are also persons in whom the internal capacities and powers of the soul are awakened. And are not these works miracles for them also ? Certainly they are, and in a far higher sense, with a far greater power, and with a far profounder meaning than before. They are miracles ; and are none the less miracles to them who see that all the action and movement of the universe of spirit and of matter are most miraculous. They are the works of God ; and not the less the works of God, because there is no such thing and never was nor can be, as a work without God ; as a work which is not His work, done by such an instrumentality and in

such a way as His purpose requires ; done by infinite power, animated by infinite love, and guided by infinite wisdom ; but, for the most part, using finited and imperfect means, *because* this infinite wisdom sees that by these means the purposes of this infinite love may be best accomplished.

To such persons as these, all things are miracles ; but, for them, the miracles of the soul are to the miracles of the body, what the soul is to the body.

To them therefore also the words are addressed, "Believe me for the works' sake." But they see in the miraculous cures and restorations which our Lord wrought visibly, the forms and signs of precisely correspondent cures and restorations which by His divine power, he wrought then, and is for ever working, in the world of spirit. And for these works' sake they believe in Him.

They believe that He only can, and that He does, open the eyes of the spiritually blind that they may see Him in His works ; that He only can and does unstop the ear of the spiritually deaf that they may hear His words ; that He alone bids the lame walk in the way of life, and cleanses the leprous soul, invigorates the spiritually paralytic, and re-animates the spiritually dead.

They read the record of these miracles ; and in what they read find corroboration and proof of His universal presence and universal action, until the mind bows prostrate before the infinite wonder of that power which built and sustains the universe, and fills and forms and guides every atom in it, with a love, a wisdom and a power as perfect, as if that atom were the only thing God cared for.

It is often said by Swedenborg, and by those who speak of the New Church, that it does not rest upon the evidence of miracles, because it differs from preceding churches, in the fact that miracles are not its proper evidence. In a most important sense, this is true. Nor is it any thing but another way of presenting the same truth, if we say that while the

miracles which attested the first Christian church were not less miracles than those which attested the Israelitish church, but differed so entirely from them in their nature that they were wholly worthless to them to whom only the thunders of Sinai could have spoken ; so miracles attest the second coming of the Lord, which are so entirely distinct in their nature from those which attested His first coming, that they are rejected by those who are astonished at the incredulity of the Jews because they were not convinced by the miracles of Jesus.

Let us remember precisely what a miracle is ; not merely a “wonder” but “a sign,” or a wonder intended to “signify” and to prove the existence, the presence, and the power of God. It is then obvious that miracles may be of two kinds. One, where a strange thing is done in such a way as to have this effect. The other, where a common thing is done, but such extraordinary light is thrown upon it, that it may produce this effect.

If a fevered man be healed at once by a word so uttered as to assure us that God spake it by His messenger, it would be a miracle of the first kind.

If he were cured in the course of treatment, and our eyes were opened, so that we saw a messenger from God in some way imparting to the physician (then or before) instruction as to what medicines should be used ; then giving efficacy to the medicine, and entering into the body invigorating the life within and helping it to receive a curative influence, and so we saw the man get well, it would be a miracle of the second kind.

Now the doctrines of the New Church convert all instances of cure into precisely these miracles ; and not cures of disease only, but all the works, and activities and forces of nature. They open our eyes, until we see not only that God is in them, but that He is all the life, and power, and force that is in each one of them.

His second coming is indeed attested by miracles, which are only too vast, too constant, too overwhelming, for our feeble thought. Let the light of the truths in which He comes fall upon a blade of grass, an insect, or a dew-drop, and it shines with the glory of Omnipotence. But I feel the utter impotence of words even to indicate this. Let me say only, that while this PROOF, like every other, depends for its influence upon the mind which receives it, in itself, it has the whole strength of absolute certainty. If the wild and groundless fantasies of those who are now expecting a literal "end of the world" were realized, and he whose mind was penetrated with the truths of the New Church looked on and saw the "saints" lifted up in their white robes, and the flames gathering to devour this solid globe, and heard the trumpet-tones of judgment fill earth and sky, not one particle would they add to the conviction he now holds, that the Lord God Almighty lives, and reigns and judges.

OF THE WORKING OF MIRACLES ON THE SABBATH.

A large proportion of these miracles were wrought upon the Sabbath. This gave much offence to some of the Jews: it seemed to them a violation of their law, and was regarded as evidence that He could not be a Messiah, who, when he came, would fulfil their law.

In the literal sense the law of the Sabbath demanded nothing more than a cessation of labor. But our Lord taught the Jews that "it was lawful to do well on the Sabbath-day." The law of Moses was given to an entirely natural people; to a race in whom there was almost nothing of a spiritual character, and the laws of God are all, in their literal sense, addressed to such persons: and they are all, in this sense, addressed to all persons, because all persons possess this nature, and need that it should be taught and controlled. They are addressed to them therefore, and to this nature in all,

in terms in which they can be understood and obeyed; and their requirements are such that obedience to the lowest and literal sense improves the character, bends it in the right direction, and prepares it gradually to receive the higher truths and laws which lie within the literal sense.

The Sabbath is "the Lord's day." It is the day when He rests. He hallowed the Sabbath-day, because on it He rested from His labors, not that He then ceases to act, but because His action is no longer resisted and counteracted, and made, as it were, a labor. It is the Lord's own day; because when it dawns upon the soul, the work of man becomes one with the work of God, and God rests from the necessary coercion of man, and man rests from his opposition to God. Such rest to the merely natural man, no part of whose life is yet in willing co-operation with the influent divine life, is simply a cessation of active life, or mere inaction. And therefore this was the external form of the Sabbath as given to the Jews in the laws of Moses. But by the higher truth of Christianity it was taught, that the inaction of the natural man, and his abstinence from "finding his own pleasure" and "doing his own works" on that day or in the time when the authority of God is acknowledged, were for a farther and higher end; were only to enable him to receive the divine influence, and do the works of God. And therefore it was lawful, on that day, to do any work of benevolence, any work that was unselfish, any work good in this sense.

Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for man. This ordinance, and all of the laws and ordinances of God, were not first made, and then man made for their sake. But they are all made for the sake of man, and to the end that they may help him, and guide him, and bring him back to his Father. Hence, while man's nature remains for ever the same in its essence, but puts on an infinite variety of forms, and exists in an infinite variety of states, and has therefore an infinite variety of needs, these

laws and ordinances are endowed with the capacity of perfect adaptation to all these forms, and states and needs. There is a Sabbath in the highest heaven; and in its essence it is the same with the Sabbath among the Jews, while in its form and aspect it is very different.

OF THE POWER OF FAITH.

In many of these miracles it is declared, that the faith of the person seeking help was not only the condition on which, but the means by which, the miracle was wrought. "As thou hast believed, be it done unto thee" (Matthew viii. 13); "According to your faith be it done unto you" (Matthew ix. 29); "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark ix. 23); "Great is thy faith: be it unto thee as thou wilt" (Matthew xv. 28); "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke xviii. 42); "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark x. 52). And when (Matthew xvii. 20) the raging demoniac whom the disciples could not cure was cured by the Lord, and they said to Him, "Why could not we cast him out? Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief."

How do these words and facts rebuke the falsity now prevailing far and wide, that it is of no consequence what a man thinks or believes, provided he behaves well; as if the thoughts of the man, his belief, his purposes and intentions, did not determine the character and quality of his actions.

Faith is a reality; and it is a reality not only of infinite moment, but of vast power. It would lead me quite too far, to attempt to give even a brief exposition of one most important truth revealed at this time; I say revealed, because it has never before been made known. This truth is, that Truth is itself an entity, a causative entity; the indispensable and the living instrument by which will, all will, God's will, or man's will, does its work. The divine wisdom is that by which the divine love created the universe, and still creates

it, for its preservation is perpetual creation. The thoughts of God are in all things of the universe, spiritual or material, as causes are within their effects. So also it is, that the thoughts of a man are the instruments, the living instruments, by which his affections become operative. Affections are as ends, thoughts as causes; and all outward existences are as the effects in which ends and causes are embodied.

“He that believeth is saved,” and only he, because he only has within him that instrument by means of which this inward work can be effected. And what his salvation is, and how it is, or the extent to which and the manner in which his evil qualities and tendencies have been or shall be removed or suppressed, and good ones made to take their place, must depend absolutely upon the instrumental causes by means of which this universal end of the divine love, the salvation of man, has been in his case effected.

The time will come, when this central truth, that Truth is itself real and causative, and one of the essential elements of the divine nature, will be made to cast its light upon the realms of created nature. And how strong, and clear and beautiful, will be the light which it will throw upon those dark regions of speculation, in which inquiring minds have been seeking for the solution of the problem of creation and existence; seeking, but not finding; wandering like blind men who wander in their own darkness. On this subject, as on many others, we have lost a knowledge which was once possessed. To the earlier thinkers, to Plato, for example, as has been well said of late, the idea of science without the idea of God was simply impossible. And because he held thus firmly and thus constantly to the belief of God, he held also that the Wisdom of God, forming itself into ideas, through those ideas creates the universe. I do not profess to understand either Plato, or the work of creation, enough to say how far he was right in the forms and details of his philosophy. But we know that the existing world of

science and philosophy is, quite too far, a world without a God; and therefore it is a world without a soul; and therefore it is a world without light.

Each one of these narratives of miraculous cure tells its own especial truth, and this truth is infinite, and is composed of all truths which are expressed in each and all the facts of every particular miracle. It would of course be impossible to give any full account of any one of these, in its spiritual meaning; but some of them it may be well to consider more specifically.

THE HEALING OF PETER'S WIFE'S MOTHER.

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she arose, and ministered unto them. — *MATT.* viii. 14, 15.

One of the earliest of the miracles was this healing of Peter's wife's mother, who lay sick of a fever. It is related in the three first gospels; and it has been the subject of remark, that such an event as this should be deemed worthy of a record so precise and circumstantial, and so often repeated. Nor can the narrative convey to any one who reads only its literal sense, any other lesson than that which might be taught by any one case out of the "multitudes of the sick" who were brought to Jesus and were cured by Him. Far otherwise is it when we look at the spiritual sense.

When I have to consider the calling of the apostles, I shall endeavor to show that the twelve, in the complex, correspond to and represent the whole church, as did the twelve children of Jacob, and the twelve tribes descended from them; each apostle representing some one of the distinctive elements of a church, — of a church, remembering that the word is but a contraction of the Greek phrase (*kuriou oikos*) which means

“the house of God;” for a church, whether in its collective and widest sense, or in any individual mind, is that condition of mind which fits it to be, distinctly and emphatically, the Lord’s dwelling-place, which makes it “none other but the house of God.” Of the apostles, Peter represents Faith. I may hereafter endeavor to illustrate this, and to show how the life of Peter presents a vivid picture of Faith in the mind, with its strength and its weakness. Now assuming this, I add that where there is a marriage, the husband has a primary reference to things of the understanding, and the wife to the corresponding affections or things of the will; for in every man, as in every woman, there is affection and intellect, but in man the intellectual predominates, and in woman the affectional. Hence, if Peter denotes Faith, the wife of Peter denotes the love of that faith; or the affection which any one has for the truths which he holds, or the affection which opens his mind for the reception of that truth. And then it is obvious, that the mother of the wife represents the love from which the love of these truths springs. For it is plain that a man who holds certain truths may hold them and love them from a vast variety of motives. If he has no love for them whatever, he will not hold them at all; but he may love them because he gets power by them, or fame, or money, or brings disciples round him, — or because they make him wiser and better.

But Peter’s wife’s mother lay sick of a fever, “a great fever;” and it made her powerless and useless.

How apt this is to be the case, or rather, how sure it is to be the case in a greater or a less degree, all men should know who are earnest in their faith; and none should know this better or remember it better, than those who hold the faith of the New Jerusalem. This fever comes and sickens us, when our love of our faith is selfish. It burns within us in the degree in which we love this faith because it is our own, and seek to make proselytes, and extend the reception of our

faith because we desire to bring others over on our side, and induce them to acknowledge or regard us as right or wise. And when this fever is great, we are sick indeed, and useless; and perhaps most useless when we are most active and urgent, and think ourselves most useful.

Nor can we become truly useful, unless we become conscious of our disease, and look to the Lord for help; for then He comes, and "rebukes the fever," and "lifts us up;" for then, and then only, we may arise and minister unto Him and His church.

OF LEPROSY.

Perhaps the lesson just stated, may be enforced, and may help us to be calm and patient in our efforts to diffuse the truth, when we remember what is said, both in the Old and New Testaments, about Leprosy. Of this disease, it is enough now to say, that this fearful and destructive malady corresponds to and represents the sin, or spiritual disease, of profanation. But I use this word in the peculiar sense in which it is employed in the New Church. As little is known now by Christians generally of profanation, as is known among us of leprosy. Briefly, it may be defined as a mingling of good with evil; of truth with falsehood; as the seeing clearly and possessing fully spiritual truth, and yet calling it evil and false, or subordinating it to evil purposes and affections.

When they who saw, and made no effort to deny, that our Lord cast out devils, declared, that He cast out devils through the prince of the devils, our Lord replies to them, and then goes on to say, "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." They to whom this was said, saw clearly, and admitted as a certainty, the supernatural and miraculous power of the Lord; but, that it might not compel them to obey His words, and

put their sins away, they called it devilish. The same blasphemy exists, wherever truth is clearly seen, certainly known and firmly fixed in the understanding, but has no power over the will, and is renounced in the life. This blasphemy is profanation; it is the —almost—unpardonable sin; it is the —almost—necessarily fatal disease of the soul; it is the —almost—incurable disease of leprosy. They who thus mingle truth and falsehood in the fabric and very substance of their own minds are and must be of all men most wretched. To heaven they cannot go; and to them it must be difficult to find in hell the relief which others have who are there because they love evil and falsehood best, but are not tormented by the consciousness of truths which they cannot cast forth from their minds.

All that is said of leprosy in the Old Testament refers, in the spiritual sense, to this condition. And the leper then, and ever since, has been separated from his fellow-men and condemned to solitude, or to companionship with only his like, to denote the fatal infectiousness as well as the fearful character of the disease. And this may help those who know the correspondence of the disease to understand the deadly nature of the sin.

In nothing is Divine Providence more watchful than to guard men against this terrible danger. It cannot be wholly prevented except by suppressing human freedom, and therefore it is not wholly prevented. But men are preserved, as far as may be, by external means and internal means, from a knowledge of the truth, when their states are such that they *could not* yield obedience to the truth, nor acquire a love for it; or if, for a season, they could renounce their sins in obedience to the truth, but would be sure to return to them with deeper delight.

The Love and Wisdom of God are as perfect in His work of prevention, as in what He does or permits. Therefore it is that religious truth is given not only in gradual dis-

pensations, but is never so given to any man as to exercise irresistible coercion over his understanding. And all are free to refuse to hear what they do not love to hear, to pass by with indifference or reject with contempt, truths which are an immeasurable good, when willingly received.

To profanation in its various forms, our Lord often refers ; thus He said — and always says — to those whom He has cured, “Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee.” So, in the parable of the evil spirit, who, being cast out of a man, returned to his house, and, finding it empty, swept and garnished, brought back with him seven spirits worse than himself, He said, “and the last state of that man was worse than the first.”

It may be well to remark, that while the correspondence and significance of blindness, deafness, lameness, palsy, leprosy, are certain, and many of them obvious, they do not fall now, if ever they did, upon individuals, merely by reason of the internal disease existing in them which this external represents.

In heaven and in hell, all externals and surroundings are adapted to each person. This is there possible, because all are there arranged and associated by affinity, and the character of each is definitely established. Here it is altogether otherwise. The good and the evil mingle ; and not only are good and evil persons together, but good and evil mingle in all things and every thing of earth. Not only the whole earth and its more general components, but every thing upon it, is but the common resultant of a combined influx from above and from below, and from various sources above and below.

Diseases are effects manifested in the body. But in the body of every man exist *potentially*, elements derived from every ancestor. In the present state of human knowledge we know but little of the effects of this upon health or disease ; and cannot even conjecture in what manner this all-embracing

inheritance of qualities and tendencies affects or determines the operations of divine providence in behalf of any man.

We are not however left to grope in utter darkness on this point; one thing we are taught: no disease and no calamity gives to the sufferer or his neighbors ground for the fear, or the reproach, that a correspondent internal sin has called it down. "There were present some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you nay. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell,—think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you nay. . . . And as Jesus passed by, He saw a man which was blind from his birth; and his disciples asked him, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

Quite analogous to the miraculous cure was the miraculous feeding of many thousand by a few loaves and fishes. Here also each narrative is full of specific instruction in every one of its specific facts and words. I must confine myself to stating the general significance of these miracles. It is, first, that it is the divine power, only and absolutely the divine power, acting usually through the customary forms and forces of created existence,—an exercise of divine power which, could we but understand it, would seem to us unspeakably miraculous and beneficent,—that provides by the ordinary methods of growth, and by the few seeds sown, all food and sustenance. And secondly, if we think of spiritual food, we may learn that to the soul that waits on Him and looks to Him, a little, very little, very humble food in the affections, thankfully received and acknowledged as His gift, may be blessed and vivified and enlarged, until the whole soul is satisfied with food, even with the bread of life.

OF DEMONIAC POSSESSIONS.

The miracles by which devils were cast out from persons of whom they had taken possession are generally regarded as not merely analogous to the miracles of cure, but as the same thing. As demoniac possession is wholly unbelieved, the recorded instances are explained as cases of insanity, or of nervous or spasmodic disease.

In this theory there is some truth, but more that is not true. All evil is the perversion of good; all evil life the perversion of life which in its origin was good. When evil life comes to man, it comes to him from those who have made it evil in themselves by choice and act, and who are therefore devils, — for there is no other meaning to the word devils. It comes to man because he desires it and loves it. When it brings pain, he does not love the pain. But the loves he indulges open the mind to receive, and bring to him by affinity, the life of similar loves from them in the other world who have made these loves their life.

Evil life comes to man from evil spirits variously; and to no two men does precisely the same life come or in precisely the same way. But all the ways in which this life comes to man and is received by him, may be arranged into four classes.

The first is that which may be called the common way, — or the normal way, so far as any thing of this kind can be called normal. It comes into the thoughts and affections, is silently and unconsciously received there, creates no apparent disorder and causes no conflict, and all the man knows, is, that he lives, thinks, feels and acts, as he chooses to.

The second is where it enters into the man's thoughts and affections, but meets active antagonists there; meets better thoughts and better affections, which enter into conflict with the evil. The man is conscious of the conflict and disturbance within him, sometimes most painfully conscious of this,

but does not know the cause. And the conflict continues until the man, by his own voluntary choice and self-determination, gives the victory to one or other of the combatants.

The third way is, when the conflict between the evil life and a better life goes down into the body. Then there is sickness, disease and pain. Of this disease the man is generally conscious, but not always. It is a familiar fact, that some of the most fatal diseases are insidious in their approach; and while gathering strength which cannot afterwards be resisted, the man is wholly unconscious of them; sometimes because there are no indications which could be seen, but more often, perhaps, because these indications are disregarded as long as that is possible.

These three forms or methods of demoniac action were common enough in the times to which the Gospels relate, and before these times, and have been so ever since, and are likely to be so in the future.

But there was then and there still another form or method of demoniac action, not so common. It was a vast deal more intense than in the cases or forms of action above enumerated. It conquered the man at once. It beat down all that remained of his power of self-determination. It took possession of him; and the common phrase "possessed of the devil" described the case with accuracy.

It was not uncommon in those times, because it was then that the condition of mankind had fallen to its lowest point. It was then that the encroachments of evil through man's voluntary permission, and the growth and establishment of the power of evil over man by his voluntary co-operation, and the decay and suppression of human freedom, had gone so far that nothing less than an almighty power, working in and through a human nature, could defeat this assault from hell, and suppress this uprising from the kingdom of death, and re-establish the dying freedom of man.

It was common in Judea, because the Jews were still what

they had been from the beginning, the most natural of mankind. When the human race had fallen so low, they were at the bottom. For this reason our Lord was born in Judea, of a Jewish mother. There, more than elsewhere, the distinctive elements of human life had been suppressed, and man had ceased to be man; there, more than elsewhere, was all spiritual wisdom extinguished. "I looked, and behold there was no man, even among them no counsellor that could answer a word. . . . And He saw that there was no man; . . . therefore His arm brought salvation."

All the particulars of the different instances in which devils were cast out are significant by correspondence, and were recorded because they were thus significant. Some of them it may be well to notice.

The first man from whom a devil that possessed him was cast out, was in the synagogue itself.

23 And there was in the synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. — MARK i. 23-25.

There, what should have been the heart and centre of religious worship, instruction and authority, had become, by the utter perversion of the national mind, the stronghold of all that was false and evil. And in every victim of demoniac possession, the very centre of his heart, where the worship of God should reign, was opened to the devil, who could enter unopposed and make the man his property and his prey.

In the cases of cure properly so called, relief followed at once when the saving strength of divine power was put forth. But when the devils were cast out from the demoniacs, they threw their victims down, and tore and tormented them. How could it be otherwise?

The devils made some of their victims "blind and dumb;" and here the inward inability to see or to say one thing that was good or true came forth externally. Others they made to dwell among the tombs, among the dead; and they had already slain within them every thing which had any thing of genuine life. And others they oftentimes cast bodily into the fire, as they had already cast them spiritually into the fire of unbridled lust; and into the water, which only represented those waves of falsehood which had gone over their souls.

Peculiarly instructive in its details is the case of the demoniak of the Gadarenes, or Gergesenes, — Matthew giving the name of the district, and Mark and Luke the name of a large city in the district.

1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.)

9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there, nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand), and were choked in the sea. — MARK v. 1-13.

This wretched victim of infernal possession came from the tombs, could wear no clothes, and night and day was crying, and cutting himself with stones. It is hardly necessary to refer to the symbolism of garments and stones, as signifying two classes of truths; nakedness representing the entire absence of one class, and the cutting himself with stones, the injuring himself by the truths of the other class perverted into falsehoods. He broke all the chains and fetters which could be placed upon him; "neither could any man tame him." No *man*, who was only man, could. No man could fetter or control or tame these devils, for they had become too strong to be withstood by human strength, until unlimited divine power could work through a human nature and human strength.

But the devils who had got possession of these men recognized this power, and knew that they could not strive against it. They begged that "he would not torment them;" that "he would not command them to go out into the deep;" that "he would suffer them to enter into the swine." And when they were permitted to do this, "the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters."

A volume would not contain all the truths that we, even in our present darkness, may discover in this narrative. But only such a statement can now be attempted as may be compressed within a few lines.

Because there is but one Life in Itself, and this Life is the source of all derivative life, all animals as well as man exist by the influx of this life; in each animal, as in man himself,

and in every substance in the universe, be it sun or star, or tree, or cloud, or wind, or rock or a grain of sand, this influent Life which causes the recipient thing to be, is itself determined in its activity or manifestations by the form or inmost character and purpose of the recipient thing. All of the elements of this life co-exist in unity in God. All co-exist, potentially, in man; because he alone among animals is an image of God. Each man is characterized by the active prevalence of one or more of these elements and the greater or less suppression of the remainder. But animals have some only of these elements of divine life and derived human life. And the animals, of each species, contain only those elements which make them to be of that species. Animals are lower than and outside of men in this world and in the spiritual world; for they exist in both. They exist, because they receive from, or rather through, human beings, a life fitted to become their animal life, and to make them to be what they are. This life is fitted to become their life, by the characters of those human beings from whom it comes to them; for in those human beings it acquires the qualities which adapt it to become the life of the animals who receive it.

The difference between this world and the other, or between the things and creatures of this world and those of the other, may be considered in connection with other topics. Here we can only say, that precisely as it is the greatest happiness of the angels to have their life flow forth and animate good men, so it is a lower and a lesser happiness to have it flow forth and animate those innocent and useful and beautiful animals which represent the life they receive. And as it is a great delight to the devils to have their life flow forth and animate evil men, so it is a great relief to them to have it flow forth and animate the cruel, destructive, crafty, or filthy animals which represent the life they receive.

They begged for this relief, and they received it. But the devils who had thus possessed and thus tormented the

poor men who were their victims were themselves so given up to unbridled lust and utter filthiness, that they could only madden and destroy the animals they had begged leave to enter into.

But what is represented by that destruction? The devils begged not to be cast into the deep, or sea. The sea, in relation to the dry land, means the natural or external man, the dry land being the internal. The sea means this either in a good or a bad sense, accordingly as it represents the natural degree of life of the man who has become regenerate, or the natural of him who is only natural. And when the sea represents the wholly and wilfully unregenerate natural man, it represents Hell.

The devils were not cast into hell. They never, never, are cast into hell. They are never condemned by our Father to hell, or sent there by Him. They pray not to be tormented; and only when they are tormented with punishment and pain do they call it Hell. Nor are they so tormented, if they do not make it necessary for their own good that they should be. They pray to be permitted to live out their selfish and natural lives; and they are permitted so to live and to enjoy all the delights of such a life, with such limitations and under such restraints as will be best for them; they are permitted to infuse their life into men so far as it is well for men that this should be, and into animals so far as to make those animals lead lives true to their proper order and nature. But when their infernal loves and lusts uprise in rebellion, and refuse all restraint, then they are made to know themselves. The glory of God shines full upon them; and the light of His presence is intolerable truth, and the warmth of His presence, from their utter opposition and antagonism, burns like fire. They rush, as down "a steep place," and cast themselves into Hell. They are punished, if they need punishment; they are tormented, if they need so much as this to reduce them to the order of which they are capable.

There they seek and find the relief and ease of spiritual death; of the death which is untroubled by any thought of spiritual truth, or by any feeling of spiritual affection. They perish, as far as immortals may. They may again — if they learn from the discipline sent to teach them — come into the delights which are still possible for them. And always infinite and inexhaustible love provides for them a way of life, in which the opposing elements of truth and good are inactive and unknown in the consciousness of these self-determined devils, but they are still taught and restrained and guided in such wise as they may be without destruction. “If I go down into hell, lo, Thou art there.” And wherever He is, He is Love, because He cannot be any thing else. And there, as everywhere, infinite love and wisdom and power are put forth to give to men all the enjoyment they can be made willing to accept.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE PARABLES.

OUR Lord spake many things in parables. It is therefore necessary to a just understanding of His words, that we should know what parables are, and why He spake in parables.

The common idea of a parable is, that it says one thing and means another. This is true; but the thing said must not be in opposition to, or in contradiction of, the thing meant. A man may say one thing and mean another, in either of two ways. He may say something for the purpose of misleading the hearer; of preventing that which is in his own mind from being seen; of producing an impression which is the opposite of the truth. If he so speaks, he utters a falsehood. But if he says one thing for the purpose of leading the hearer to what else he means, of suggesting the truth which for some reason he thinks it best to intimate thus indirectly, he then utters a parable.

The words said may suggest the thing meant by some law of analogy; or by stating strongly some single instance which will bring to mind a general rule or truth; or by saying something which is true on a lower plane of thought, and suggests at once a similar truth on a higher plane. A parable may be either of these, or all of these together.

In the Bible, proverbs and parables are spoken of as if they were almost the same thing. We commonly make a wider distinction between them. And yet all proverbs are parables. A vast part of the common, practical wisdom of most nations

is expressed and made familiar to the common mind by proverbs. A brief consideration of any of the most common would show that they often — either by some analogy, or by a sharp and striking instance of some general principle, or by suggesting higher forms and applications of the truths they express — do in fact teach important truth under trivial or jesting expressions.

Not only is all poetry full of parables, or of calls upon the imagination to perceive more than the words express; and not only does all rhetoric and all literature permit a frequent appeal to this power of imagination, — but, as has been already said, nearly all our language is founded upon it.

It is indeed true, that a large proportion — and the more we examine into it the larger will seem this proportion — of the thought and speech of man is parabolic. But this is true of man only. We have no reason whatever to believe, and we have every reason whatever to deny, that animals have any portion whatever of this faculty or habit of expressing themselves in parables. Let us see if we discern the ground or cause of this difference between man and all other animals.

Let us assume that man is immortal and beasts are not; that, when man dies, he begins to live another life in another world; that, when a beast dies, his life terminates. It is plain therefore that a beast can gain nothing by learning any thing about another life; or, more accurately, that a beast cannot possibly learn, and could not, whatever might be his power of thought, learn any thing whatever about *his* other life, for the plain reason that there is no other life for him.

But it is also plain, that as man has another life which he will live hereafter, it may be of inexpressible importance to him to learn something about that other life.

Let us then put these facts together. Let us remember that man will live another life, and that it must be of great importance to him to learn something about it; that the beasts will not live another life, and need not and cannot

learn any thing about it; and that man has this faculty and habit of thinking and speaking in parables, and beasts have not; then perhaps we may be able to regard it as at least probable, that man possesses this faculty, which he alone has, that he may by means of it acquire the knowledge which he alone needs.

This faculty enables him to acquire this knowledge, because by means of it he may discern the higher truth which lies within lower forms. He may begin with thinking of the lowest and simplest things, and adjust his words to them; and then, by a perception of which he may or may not be conscious, see that what is true of the thing in his hand or under his eye is true of the thing in his mind and in his heart; so entirely true, that the same word which expresses this truth in its lowest form, is the best word he can have to express the same truth in its higher form.

But this faculty could not exist, or, if it existed, there could be no possibility of its exercise, if it were not grounded upon a correspondence between the world without man and the world within him. For if there were no such correspondence, it is plain that what was true of the one would not be true of the other; and therefore a truth told about the one would tell nothing about the other. And, on the other hand, if it be true, as all human life and thought and conversation testify, that what is true of one is true of the other, then must it be certain, that the one corresponds to the other. There can be no better proof and no clearer assertion of the correspondence between two things, than to say that what is true about the one is true about the other.

That this correspondence, or resemblance, or analogy, exists in some general, indefinite, and imperfect manner, all admit who ever think about it. Indeed they cannot discuss this very question without using words which, by their double sense, prove it. But it is now made known, that this correspondence not only exists in fact, but is universal and all-

embracing. Hence, it is not only true, that some things which are true of the world without are also true of the world within, but that whatever is true of the world without is also true, in some way, of the world within.

Hence also, we may derive some conclusions from the converse of the preceding reasoning. We began with the assumption that man is immortal and the beast is not; and we thus accounted for the possession by man of this faculty, which is of so much worth to an immortal being, and the non-possession of it by the beast, to whom it would be worthless. Beginning now with the unquestionable facts that man possesses this faculty and the beast does not, and that it must be of infinite value to him that is immortal and of no value to him that is not, we may see it to be a reasonable conclusion from his possession of this faculty, that man *is* immortal, and that the beast is not.

In the olden time, there were heathen philosophers who asserted the existence of the gods, but declared that they lived in perfect repose, lifted far above all interest in, all care for, and all government of this lower world. A belief in such gods as these, even if we suppose this belief to be not only possible but actual and more than verbal, was no belief in God. The sect of Epicurus (who did not originate such notions but reduced them to a system) no longer exists in name; but it has some existence in fact: for they hold only a modified form of the doctrine of Epicurus, who believe that God made the world and filled it with certain forces which were subjected to certain laws, and then left it to the operation of these forces. This view prevails extensively; nor indeed should we go too far if we said that while it governs absolutely some minds, it has an influence upon nearly all minds. We fear that outside of the narrow circle of those who have listened to the instruction of Swedenborg, it would not be easy to find many who have a clear and constant perception of the truth, that the continued existence of the

universe is a perpetual creation. He teaches us, that time does not belong to God ; and while the subjection of our own minds to the laws of space and time while we live in this lower world, prevents our forming any adequate conception either of this truth or of all its consequences, there are some things which we may see clearly in the light of this truth.

One of these is, that whatever God was, He is ; and whatever He did, He does. His action to-day being, to-day, in and through materials and agencies different from those of yesterday, the results differ. But the action is continuous, ever present, ever the same in essence, and as necessary to-day in order that things may continue to be, as it was in the beginning that they might begin to be.

But how can the Infinite reach the finite ? Where can they meet ? How can the unmeasurable abyss between them be bridged over ? Here is a material world ; in all its parts subjected to the absolute control, and the universal limitation, of time and space. Above it is an infinite being, wholly independent of time or space or limitation. Can He come in contact with this world ? — or, if not, how can He from afar form it and fill it and govern it ?

It would seem reasonable to suppose that this was done through and by means of intermediates. How, we know but little now, and never can know all. But we may know enough to say, that if there be a world, intermediate in its nature between the Supreme Infinite and earth, He may use this intermediate world as His means of approach to earth.

This intermediate world we have in the world of mind, or spirit. This too partakes of the lower world or is so far connected with it, that it recognizes it, and uses it, and is affected by the laws and limitations of space and time. But it has also an aspect toward the Infinite. It is affected by, but is not bound by, space and time. It recognizes them, but it also recognizes itself in independence of them ; and distinctly discerns the material universe as a home which it can in-

habit and an instrument it can use ; and as existing outside of itself and below itself. And it can look towards the Infinite ; it can recognize the Infinite ; it can begin, although humbly and afar off, to rise towards the Infinite ; and it can at least hope, that this upward progress shall itself partake of the Infinite. The world of mind thus, on the one hand, rests upon the finite ; and on the other reaches upwards and aspires towards the Infinite. Assuredly it is not unreasonable to say, that by this intermediate world, the Infinite comes down to the world below. And then it is not unreasonable to say, that these two worlds must stand in a certain definite relation to, or in a certain definite correspondence with, each other, to the end that the Highest may find in the higher, a means of approach to the lower. Nor, do we carry out these views to their legitimate consequences, until we say that the material world is, therefore, a sign, a symbol, an expression, a revelation of the immaterial world ; or, in fewer words, that the universe of matter may be regarded as one great parable of the universe of mind. Nor can we express this universal truth in a better universal form, than by quoting an apothegm from the fragments ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus. These are fragments of what was gathered into a whole many ages later than the period assigned to it, and were then ascribed to a mythical person ; but they are fragments of a whole which was intended to preserve the knowledge of an earlier age. One of these fragments is this : "There is nothing in the world of spirit, which does not exist in the world of matter in a material way ; there is nothing in the world of matter, which does not exist in the world of spirit in a spiritual way."

"Without a parable spake he not unto them." In no other way could our Lord speak unto them. Every word that He uttered was, of necessity, a parable. It was spoken to them ; but it was spoken by the Infinite to the finite. If it states with distinctness a truth of the highest order of truth,

then, that it might be so spoken as to be apprehensible by a human intellect, it must clothe itself in a form lower than itself; and within that form must live higher and yet higher degrees of infinite truth. It is by means of a parable of some kind, that infinite Truth, by the necessity of its own infinitude, ever does and ever must address itself to a finite understanding.

And so it may be said that every act of God, every manifestation of divine providence, may be regarded as a parable. Every circumstance of human life, be it large or less, be it such that the man whom it affects is not even conscious of it or if he knows it forgets it at once, came down from the Infinite; its source was infinite love; its guide was infinite wisdom; it was itself a putting forth of infinite power; and it had for its end the infinite good of the man. Is not the whole external universe a parable, of which the internal universe is the meaning?

All the acts and all the discourses of our Lord are parabolic. But many of them cannot be seen to be so, except by the disclosure of their spiritual sense through the laws of correspondence. Others are obviously parabolic, although not so in form; as His cleansing of the temple; His discourse with Nicodemus concerning regeneration; His conversation with the Samaritan woman concerning the well of Jacob, and the water he would give to them who came to him; His washing of the feet of the disciples; His declarations that He is the bread of heaven, and that He is the true vine; his requirement that men should eat His flesh and drink His blood; His statement concerning the "temple of His body," and other similar passages which it is difficult to separate by any clear distinction from some of those which are expressly called or more usually considered as parables.

I cannot attempt to speak in detail of all of these; but will consider some of them.

THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE.

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting.

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence: make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.—JOHN ii. 13-16.

When the Jewish Passover was near at hand, Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and finding in the temple those who made it a house of merchandise, He drove them out.

The Passover is one of the facts in the history of the children of Israel which has always been regarded as typical and emblematic, or as having a spiritual reference and meaning. And St. Paul calls Jesus Christ "Our passover sacrificed for us."

The Passover indicates literally the time, and spiritually the state, when the line is drawn between Egypt and Israel; between those who choose the way of death, and those who do not die, because they are ready to go out from Egypt and begin the pilgrimage which leads to Zion. We may then believe that at this time, or in this state of mind, the divine influence draws especially near to the temple of the soul, which was built to be the House of God. It finds it still occupied by those affections, and habits, and falsities, which have converted it into a house of merchandise; of sensuous and selfish merchandise. They are innumerable. It is thought, by commentators, probable, that the oxen, the sheep and the doves, were brought there to be sold to those who bought these animals for the purpose of sacrifice. And the money changers who sat there, made their gains from the necessities or convenience of those who came to the temple

from different parts of Palestine, or from Jewish settlements in distant countries, and there made these purchases.

All this indicates that the persons, or the states of mind, herein referred to, are not those which utterly reject and deny the authority of religion or even neglect its external observances; but to those — for our Lord scourged and drove them away — who make of religion a matter of merchandise. Again we say, they are innumerable; for they are as many as the mean, unworthy, and polluting motives, which may make men outwardly observant of religion. For example, men may do this to make money out of it; or to secure a good and profitable or agreeable position in society; or to acquire honor and influence; or even, by exact outward observance, to atone for and obtain the right of indulging favorite evil affections or an evil life, and satisfy so much of their conscience as still calls them to pay some regard to religion.

Our Lord scourged them and drove them away with a whip of small cords. And from the temple of the soul He drives these states, these evil feelings and falsities away, if only He can save the sinful from the death of confirmed sin, by that “whip of small cords,” that myriad of constant but smaller instructions and influences and other modes of discipline, which may at last cleanse the temple.

THE CONVERSATION WITH NICODEMUS.

1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb; and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. — JOHN iii. 1-5.

This man was “a Pharisee” and “a ruler of the Jews;” and he impersonates that class of natural men, whose merely external goodness gives them prominence and influence; they value goodness, and can recognize Christianity as the cause and promoter of goodness. So, “they come to Jesus.” But they come by night; they come in utter darkness. And the first thing His religion does indeed tell them, will pour upon their eyes the light of morning, if their natural goodness is willing to receive light and life.

The Jewish passover was at hand; and Jesus had gone up to Jerusalem. The question was, who of its inhabitants were ready to set forth upon the way of life eternal? who among them would then receive Him; not in words only, but in heart and in life? “Many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which He did.” Nicodemus was one of those who thus believed. But what was the character, what the value and efficacy of this belief?

Our Lord applied to it an unerring test. He declared the absolute necessity of Regeneration. He asserted this need so distinctly and so emphatically, that no one can even pretend to believe the Gospels, or, in other words, to be a Christian, and deny the necessity of regeneration, whatever that may mean.

Hence, while no question has ever been made as to this need, all controversies on the subject have turned upon the nature of regeneration. It has been held by some to be a work effected at once by baptism; and this may be regarded as, theoretically, the doctrine of the Roman Church, and of the English Episcopal Church. The system of belief which calls itself Evangelical Orthodoxy regards it as the effect of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to those who were elected before the world was and predestined to have faith in Him and thereby receive this imputation. And what

may be called either Naturalism or Rationalism regards regeneration as only the improvement and confirmation of the natural goodness of man; for which work his own unaided strength is sufficient.

The answer of Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" indicates the answer that the merely natural mind ever has made and ever must make to the requirement of Regeneration. If the goodness be only natural, or in no degree originating in or animated by a recognition of the necessity of divine assistance and the duty of obedience to God and of avoidance of evil-doing *as sin against Him*,—and if nothing more is asked than to grow better in the way in which one is already good, there is no objection and no difficulty. But, to be "born again"! To have new and different motives, purposes, and views of all things; to become a new man in affection, thought and belief; to bring into natural life and natural goodness and natural enjoyment, a new soul;—all this seems to the merely natural man, upon whom spiritual light has not yet dawned, a simple impossibility; as inconceivable in fact as entering again into the mother's womb. And if, by any means, a merely natural man could, with no change of character, be brought to believe that he must have a new goodness, it would be impossible for him to imagine any thing more than an increase of the goodness he has already. It would be only entering again into his mother's womb, and being born again just what he was before. And this would seem to him equally useless and impossible.

But what we are told is, that "except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Here is a peremptory and unqualified statement. We may reject it; but if we do not, we must ask what it means. He is born of water when, by obedience to the truth, as God's truth, his external life is cleansed from sin. He is born of the spirit, when this obedience is spiritual; when it

knows that the power to obey, the very desire to obey, must be from God, and from His present, constant, and acknowledged help and influence. This help and influence must be acknowledged, and received by man voluntarily and in his own freedom, or they cannot produce the new faith, and the new nature.

The succeeding verses tell us, that as the Serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, so must the Serpent within us, or our sensuous, natural, self-seeking and self-worshipping nature, be lifted up in our wilderness; that so the Son of Man lifted up the nature he received from his mother, and we must follow in the path He trod.

The Serpent,—that cannot leave the ground, but must always be in contact with it or with something growing upon it, but is there agile, or powerful, or poisonous beyond all animals,—the Serpent always represents the sensuous nature of man, his sensuous affections and his sensuous understanding; or that part of his nature which is in contact with the earth and the things of earth. From the part he plays in the fall of man, and the fiery serpents who slew the Israelites, and the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up, and from every other mention of it in the Bible, infinite instruction is derivable as to this sensuous nature, the mischiefs it works when unregenerate, and the process of its regeneration.

That we may better know what regeneration is, our Lord tells us, in this connection, what condemnation — the exact opposite of regeneration — is. “This is the condemnation; that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness better than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” And if the question then occurs Where is this light, and what is it? let us remember that Jesus Himself declared, “I am the light of the world.” Why then

need we doubt what regeneration is? It is to come to Jesus as to the light. To receive Him, and obey Him, as the light that came to earth to lead us to heaven. To "let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven;" and who is ever ready to impart strength to all who will receive it and make use of it in their own freedom.

THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN OUR LORD AND THE
WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again.

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband.

18 For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband : in that saidst thou truly. — JOHN iv. 4-18.

28 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did : is not this the Christ ? — JOHN iv. 28, 29.

The conversation between our Lord and the woman of Samaria, at the well of Jacob, has always attracted much attention, and has been subjected to a great variety of comment and interpretation. If we would now apply to it the principles of correspondence and thus discover its spiritual meaning, every minute fact and every word would be found significant, and volumes could not exhaust their meaning. All that can now be attempted is to give a very general view of the leading facts of the narrative.

Much that was said in a former chapter of Galilee may be said of Samaria. It had formed a part of the Holy Land ; and when the ten tribes revolted, it was included in their kingdom. When conquered by the Assyrians, the Israelitish inhabitants were, for the most part, removed. But the mixed races who possessed the country soon learned to reverence Jehovah ; and asked and obtained from their conquerors an Israelitish priest. And when the Jews, on their return from captivity, proposed to rebuild their temple, the Samaritans desired to participate, and were refused. And from this time (more than five centuries before Christ), a hostile feeling existed between the Jews and the Samaritans, and was in full force at the coming of our Lord.

At that time the Jews constituted a church only in externals ; and while their pride and arrogance and self-glorification were excessive, their internal character was expressed by their denial and crucifixion of our Lord. But the Samaritans, while held by them in utter scorn, possessed and revered the Bible, or a large part of it, and in a considerable degree complied with its literal requirements.

From all this we may be prepared for the general inference

that the Samaritans, at the time of this narrative, represented those who might be considered Gentiles in reference to the church, while they were far nearer to it than the surrounding or distant nations between whom and Judea there was no acknowledged relation whatever.

If we follow the spiritual sense, which exists through and applies to all time, we may say that the Samaritans represent those now whom the strict adherents to the dogmatic creeds and forms of the existing church would regard as Gentiles, and with whom they could hold no religious communion. And such persons might not regard themselves as members of the church; but, if represented by the Samaritans, they have the Bible, and they have some reverence for it, and some love for it.

It was a woman of Samaria. Man and woman, as has been often said, represent severally understanding and affection; because in man the understanding prevails and in woman the affections. She therefore represented the affectional condition of such persons; and as water universally represents truth, the well of Jacob may be seen at once to represent the book which contained the religious system of the descendants of Jacob, or the Bible. And when at the present day, their affections lead such persons to come to it and draw water from it, they find the Lord sitting there. And his weariness as well as the humiliation and suffering of his whole life, express the absolute antagonism between the influences He then desired and always desires to exert, and those opposing influences which must always prevail in a perverted and desolate church; and in a mind not yet ready to receive him, but unable or unwilling to reject Him utterly.

He asks her to give Him to drink from the water of this well.

Throughout the Scriptures, the phrase "Give unto God" is frequently recurring; as "give glory," "give greatness,"

“give strength,” and the like. And we give these things unto Him, in the only way we can, when we acknowledge that they belong to Him and are from Him. Therefore, we obey this command, when we give unto Him the acknowledgment that all the good and truth we have is His, and from Him. On this meaning of “giving to God,” sacrifices were originally founded. Useful and harmless things were offered on His altar, in token of the perception and acknowledgment that they were His gifts to men.

He asks of all who now come to the well of Jacob for water, to know and to acknowledge that He is the only source of its truth, and of all truth; that He is truth itself, and the light which enlightens all who do not walk in darkness; He asks them to “give unto God” that which comes from Him.

If to-day, one who is taught this by the doctrines of the New Church, and is enabled to see it as he sees the sun at noonday, offers the blessing of this truth to those who are like the Samaritan woman, they might well regard it as only an assertion of some religious dogma; they might well reply, as this woman, in substance, replied, “You forget that we do not profess to belong to a church and accept its creeds. They who do so profess, say that only in their Jerusalem, in their temple, should men worship. And there we cannot go.” And the answer would be, that the hour has come, when the true worshippers of the Father worship Him acceptably, not only in all places of the earth we live in, but in all regions of belief, under all forms and names.

It may be with no disrespect, and with no disposition to reject the truth, that such persons would answer to the New Church as the woman answered our Lord, “Art thou greater than our father Jacob?” Do you pretend to offer us more than the Bible; to give us higher and better truth than that can tell us? But through the truth which He now reveals, our Lord may again reply to them who know it only as the

well of Jacob, and read in it only its literal truth as a book given to the children of Israel, "Whoso drinketh (thus) of this water shall thirst again; but the water which I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Happy are they who answer as she answered, "Give me this water."

The woman said that she knew the Messiah would come, and tell all things. A positive love of goodness makes one feel the want of the truth which teaches it and leads to it; the want of divine help. It lifts the eyes to God, as the Revealer. To this desire the information is not given in vain, that He has come, and that these revelations have been made.

Our Lord said unto her, "Go, call thy husband and come hither." When a man and woman are indeed married, the man is the *truth* of his wife's *good*; it is his work to give to her all those truths and knowledges which are needed to lead and guide aright her affections; and it is her work to fill with energy, life and love all the truths he knows. To go for her husband, was to go for or seek for the truths which her state of affection required; and with that truth joined to that affection, come to Him for more instruction. Her response indicated and represented the state of those who have some love of good, but no truth to lead them to good. She said she had no husband; and in the words which follow, our Lord describes the condition of such persons, when they have been wedded successively to one apparent truth and then to another, and now feel that what truth they hold could not harmonize with their affections and lead and guide and strengthen them, and be what a husband is to the wife of his soul.

She represented those who feel this; and she expressed it in the hope of the Messiah who would, at last, tell her all things. And afterwards she said of Christ to her neighbors, "He told me all that I ever did." And yet he had told her

but one thing;—that she had no husband. But a strong and living desire for goodness inspires an equal desire for the truth which can lead to it; and when this affection feels that it “has no husband,” it is prepared to find and to receive in the revelations now made, “all things;” to see in them an explanation of divine providence in the events of the past life, and a light for the future. For let the truths which these revelations teach, enter into the mind and live there, and day by day, as thought wanders back and brings up the experiences of the past, the veils are lifted. We see why and whence these experiences came, sad and mournful as some of them were. We see ourselves. We see what we were; and we see the merciful providence by which we have become somewhat better than we were. And we see that the path which led through the past to the present hour may go forward with a never ending progress.

THE SOWER WHO WENT OUT TO SOW.

3 Hearken ; Behold, there went out a sower to sow :

4 And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth ; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth :

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched ; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. — MARK iv. 3-8.

In some instances our Lord gives the explanation of a parable; but the explanation is itself a parable. Thus, he had spoken of the sower whose seed fell, some by the wayside, some on stony ground, some among thorns, and some on good ground. “And when he was alone, they that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable. And he said

unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables. That seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted and their sins be forgiven them."

What can be more positive or direct than this assertion that the Divine Providence purposes and desires to avoid converting sinners, lest their sins should be forgiven them? But they who read this assertion must have a very low and false idea of Divine Providence, if they are not sure that within it there must lie a meaning by which it may be explained and qualified. We may begin to see this meaning, when we compare this passage from Mark, with the similar passage in Matthew. There we read that seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, because their ears are dull, *lest* they should hear, and *they have closed* their own eyes *lest* they should see, and be converted and healed. That is, the deafness and the blindness are their own voluntary work, and spring from a confirmed unwillingness to be converted and healed. This then is their choice, their work; and all that God does, is not to violate their choice, or prevent their work against their will.

Here we have a most important lesson, repeated in very many places; and it is one that cannot be learned too well. It is, that the providence of God always respects and preserves the freedom of man. I have already endeavored to show, that in the New Church we are taught why this is; for we learn that the divine providence thus tenderly and watchfully preserves the freedom of man, because this freedom is the means and the instrument, the indispensable means and the only possible instrument by which the constant purpose of God with man can ever be accomplished; for that purpose is, the converting of his love of evil into the love of good, by the man's own willing co-operation. And this truth

is the key to all the mysteries of God's providence for man. We learn not only that this freedom is for this reason preserved, but we learn how it is preserved. For we are taught that earth, and every thing and every creature upon it, is between heaven and hell. A man may be at one moment nearer heaven, and at another nearer hell, but he is at every moment between them, and never so near either that the influences which at any moment prevail within him, are not, in some degree mingled with and qualified by opposing influences; and between these, the man stands, with a life given to him from God to be *his own*; to be his own in freedom, in duty and in responsibility; and with full power to turn himself to the one or the other of these influences, as he will. Hence it is, that the divine influence is able, at every hour of his life, to do all that can be done in the way of leading or bending or guiding him to good, without ever forcing him into a direction which he would be sure to leave as soon as his freedom was restored. This subject is however more fully considered in other chapters, where the nature of man, and the doctrine of human selfhood are considered.

From this passage we may learn yet another lesson about the literal sense of Scripture. It is, that in this sense, truths are often made to bear the aspects which the states to which they are addressed, would impart to them. "For the hardness of their hearts," it is so written. Thus God is said, in some places, to be angry, unforgiving, and revengeful to remote generations. For so it seems to those who are angry with him, and cannot forgive the seeming unkindness which is intended for their good; and who, confirming in their own nature evil dispositions, transmit them to their posterity as tendencies to evil. So, it has been not uncommon to hear men say, that if God chose to convert them he would, and if he chose not to they could not help it; that what he had foredoomed must come to pass; and that if they were sinful because he would not have them otherwise, it was not their

fault but his. Some feeling of this kind has prevailed quite widely. How is it possible that such persons should see his providence otherwise than as if he made their ears dull and closed their eyes and spoke in words they could not understand, lest they should experience that conversion and healing and forgiveness, which it was his pleasure that they should not have? And such persons are left to think so, if they would be sure to reject the truth which would set them right, and would therefore be the worse for it.

And our Lord says to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And then he goes on to explain to them this parable. But the explanation is itself again a parable, for without a parable He did not speak to them and could not.

Satan who cometh immediately and catcheth away the word sown by the wayside (better rendered, "aside from the way"), is the false belief or persuasion that at once contradicts and denies the truth, when it falls only aside from the paths their minds habitually go in and love to go in; for it is foreign to their thoughts and is not truth to them.

And he who heareth the word with joy, and is offended when persecution and tribulation arise because of it, is he who is delighted with the new truth and with his accession of wisdom, but is at once offended when he hears this truth command him to renounce his worldliness, and his cherished lusts, and they rise up to trouble and persecute him. His lusts or the truth must die; and his lusts do not die.

And the cares of this world, and the deceitful riches, which are as thorns that choke the seed, are either the external cares and riches which are all that most men think about, or the internal cares about internal riches, it may be of truth, or even of good conduct, which may yet deceive a man into the belief that he is wise with his own wisdom, and good with his own goodness, and that his salvation is his own work. They are the "deceitful riches" which cannot but suffocate

the seeds which he who sowed them would have fructify unto that life which is from God, and when it is not perverted is able and glad to acknowledge its origin and source.

They who receive the seed into good ground bear fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty-fold, some an hundred. Every one sees that this means, that they bear fruit variously. But the science of correspondence and its laws apply even to numbers. Each of them has its spiritual force and meaning, from which its natural force and meaning are derived. Here we can only say, that three classes of persons, or three modes of fructification are here referred to, which are as definite and distinct as are the numbers used to indicate them.

OF THE TARES SOWN AMONG THE WHEAT.

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field :

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field ? from whence then hath it tares ?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up ?

29 But he said, Nay ; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest : and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them : but gather the wheat into my barn. — *MATT. xiii. 24-30.*

While we are as unconscious as they who sleep, the enemies of our souls are implanting germs of evil, or vivifying them, and they become parts of our life. Because they are parts of our life they are not crushed out ; but if the good grows into predominance over the evil, in the harvest of judgment

the evil will be separated from the ruling good within, and suppressed. But nothing is done violently. Our whole character must grow up by gradual development, first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. In this parable, as in others which have been or remain to be considered, the great doctrine is inculcated, of human freedom, power and responsibility.

Because this world, and all persons and things in it are between heaven and hell, every man has something in his character of heaven, and something of hell; and every man carries with him to the other world something which was of heaven and something of hell; for the best of men have something which needs to be gathered together and burned up, as well as something worthy of preservation; and all bad men have with that which originates in the love of self, something also bearing at least the aspect of the love of the Lord or of the neighbor, however low its true character may be. No man therefore goes instantly upon his resurrection either to heaven or to hell, because he is not fully prepared for either; but, as has been already said, into "The World of Spirits."

For men live in this world to determine whether they shall become angels or devils. They live in the World of Spirits to ascertain whether they have become angels or devils. If the love of good rule within them, all opposing loves are gradually suppressed or eliminated, and their love of good, whatever it may be, becomes free, dominant and uncontradicted. The truth which judges them, shows to them their falses and their evils clearly; and these falses and evils are burned up in that fire of hatred of all evil which they gladly receive from God and his angels; while all things true and good in them are purified and cleansed and gathered into His garners within their souls. They then become associated, by the mere force of affinity, with those like unto themselves; or those with whom a similar love of good reigns. They

become angels and are associated with angels. They take their place in heaven.

If the love of evil rules in men, all good is only outside and apparent; and all such good is gradually removed or suppressed. The truths they have held, but have neither loved nor lived, are lost. The affections which simulated good, while in their true nature they were selfish and evil, cast off their disguise. The love of evil becomes in appearance as in fact the love of their life, and by the force of affinity, they take their place with their like, and are in hell.

OF THE GRAIN OF MUSTARD-SEED.

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field :

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds ; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. — *MATT.* xiii. 31, 32.

If good seed be sown, though it be "less than all the seeds that be in the earth," yet the perfect wisdom of our Father may give to it, through all opposing influences, growth and supremacy. Blessed be the mercy, which gives to the fearful and the sorrowing, who know how little of pure and genuine good is in them, the hope, that even this little will not perish, but may grow, under the fostering care of omnipotence, into much, and into all. But something is said in this parable of the mustard-seed which calls for more particular notice.

It has already been often said, and will be often repeated, that as all things in a man's nature refer either to what is affectional, or to what is intellectual, so the universe outside of them has a similar reference. Seeds refer to the intellectual kingdom, and represent truths of a certain order. In a seed, whether vegetable or animal, a preceding life, and

a preceding series of lives, have terminated. It is an organism, formed by, and containing the sum and the whole series of vital influences which terminate in it. One who takes in his hand a minute seed, does not stop to think, that he holds in his hand the ultimatum of an unmeasurable series of causative influences. But there they are, and in such a form, that they may perish, or may live; and if they live, may give origin to a new life, which shall again be ultimated in new seeds. It may be long in the mind, latent and unknown, as seed wheat lay in the mummy tombs of Egypt which is now growing in the fields of Europe. But it still lives; and every living seed has in it the possibility of infinite multiplication and eternal duration in its progeny.

So it is with certain truths in the mind. Seeds are of all magnitudes, from the acorn which infolds the germ of an oak, to the mere point which the microscope can scarcely detect, from which may grow the smallest vegetable moss or mould; and to the multitude of yet minuter germs, of which science is yet only able to conjecture that they float in the air. And so it is with truths. But when such a truth comes before the consciousness of man, or indeed it may be in his mind but not in his consciousness, it is the effect and product of a vast series of causes, and contains a vital principle which may spring forth in growth and fruit. And it has too the possibility of never-ending reproduction, multiplication and duration in its progeny. It has the possibility of eternal life.

When the seed becomes a tree, greater than all herbs, "the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it."

One general division of the kingdom of nature refers the solid earth with all its fields to the affectional part of man, while the water which flows around it, and the air which flows around the water, are referred to the intellectual part. And the animals which walk the earth are, in general, referred to the affectional, and those that swim in the sea, or fly through the air are referred to the intellectual.

Animals which fly through the air are either insects, or birds. And insects are as thoughts, while birds are as perceptions. Every one who reflects for a moment will see that there is an essential difference between the mere thought of a thing and the perception of a truth. This last is almost affectional; for while it is clearly intellectual, or of the understanding, it springs from some emotion or affection. It is like the birds, which have what insects have not, heart and lungs and blood. It may be as long in coming into form as the egg of the eagle is in being hatched; and may come as slowly to maturity as the eaglet; but then it will be a living perception of truth. And when truths of that kind and order which are represented by seeds, grow into trees and put out great branches, it is their shelter, their support and confirmation, which these perceptions seek.

But how far shall we go in the effort to state or to illustrate such remarks as these? How little do any know and how little can any teach about such things, at present! And how little is there in science, philosophy or religion, now, which can accept instruction founded upon the great truth, that the universe is God's constant work, and that He, even with all His infinitudes, is mirrored in His work! If a naturalist, who was well acquainted with the science of botany, presented a seed to a man utterly ignorant and yet believing his ignorance to be knowledge, and spoke to him of the exquisite organization which the germinative principle formed in that seed, and of its wonderful method of development, that man would look upon him as that naturalist may look upon what I have said of the spiritual laws and nature of seeds and their correspondence. But what he now knows was not known a few years since; and what he does not now know may, in the coming years, take its place in science. It would indeed be impossible to attempt to say one word of this kind, but for the hope, that however humble it certainly is, and however insignificant it may seem, it may

yet be a living seed; and, if it be so, may fall into good ground.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN COMPARED TO A NET.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind :

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world : the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. — *MATT. xiii. 47-50.*

In our Lord's explanation of the parable of the tares and the wheat, He speaks of "the time of harvest;" and in that in which the kingdom of heaven is compared to a net, cast into the sea, and gathering of every kind, he declares, that "at the end of this world, his angels shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." And in a later parable, concerning the division of the sheep from the goats, he says, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory; . . . then shall he say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal."

Here is a declaration that the wicked shall be cast into hell; a statement when this shall be; and what hell is. But all this is delivered, as a parable. What meaning do we find within the letter?

The appalling description of hell-fire, and of the eternal agony prepared for sinners, have been very widely regarded as literally true, and probably are so regarded now by many persons. Nor would these descriptions have been given, had it not been intended by divine mercy that they should be

so believed. But in this literal form they put on their lowest and outermost expression, because in this form they may reach minds of the lowest and most external character, which could not be reached by the correspondent higher truths if they were expressed in any higher form.

When thus believed, by those of this character, they may do their proper work of repressing their evils; of turning them from actual sin; of preventing the indulgence of lusts and sinful tendencies and thus weakening their power. When they have this effect, and in proportion as they have it, they lift the man up into the possibility of understanding higher truths and being affected by higher motives. For this is the universal law of the literal sense of the word. Its constant purpose in every part is to impose that self-restraint, to induce that conduct, to cause that change of character, which may, step by step, lift the man up within reach of the higher senses. Hence this literal sense is not to be destroyed, but to be fulfilled; for then only is it enabled to fulfil its proper office.

"The end of this world" comes to every man when he dies. So far as he is concerned, it is as if the moment after, the earth became 'ashes or nothing. At this end of the world for each man, he comes to the judgment; or, better, judgment comes to him. Then the Son comes in His glory; for His glory is His divine Truth, and this truth judgeth the man. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day." In the 20th chapter of the Apocalypse a judgment is described. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened." These books are the books which all men carry with them into the other world; and in which all things which they have thought, felt, said, done or been, are recorded; these books are their own memories.

Of late years the indestructibility of thought has become admitted as a scientific fact. The statement is often made,

and evidence of various kinds has accumulated, to the effect that while any thing may be forgotten so as to be beyond voluntary recall, nothing can be so forgotten as to be lost from the mind; and every thing whatever that is ever in the mind may always afterwards come up into consciousness and recollection. The approach of death has been seen to do this work of awakening slumbering memories to a most remarkable degree. Death does it absolutely; not by reviving for all men all their past states, but all past states which the man himself needs to know that he may learn what manner of man he is. Thus is the book of his life opened. And then it is said, "And another book was opened which is the book of Life." This is the book of genuine Life; of God's own Life; it is the book in which the working of the Life of God in its whole providence towards man is recorded; it is the WORD; it is "The word which I have spoken which shall judge him at the last day." And then we are told how this judgment is effected. "And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." The things written in the books are the things written in the two books; in the book of the man's own life, and in the book of divine Life. By the harmony, or the opposition, between the things in these two books, between his works and the law given to him, he is judged, — most mercifully; yea, with infinite mercy; but by a justice which cannot fail, and a wisdom which cannot err.

From what has been said of the World of Spirits, it may be seen that this judgment may not be speedy; the disclosure may be gradual, and pass through many stages. But the end is sure. This end is, that it shall be certain and apparent, so certain and apparent that neither the man himself nor his neighbors can avoid knowing, precisely *what the man is*. And so he judges himself.

OF THE PARABLE OF THE NEW WINE REQUIRING
NEW BOTTLES.

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.—*MATT. ix. 16, 17.*

We easily apprehend a part of the meaning of the parable in which our Lord declares that new wine must be put into new bottles, because if put into old bottles, they would be destroyed and the wine would be lost. In our days these words have lost their literal truth, because our bottles are made of glass, and do not grow weaker by age. When these words were spoken, bottles were made in Judea of skins, as they now are in many eastern countries, and the parable was literally true. Of late, there is some effort to change, in our translation, the word "bottles" into the word "skins," or, at least, "vessels." And it has always been understood that the text indicated a necessity for preparation and adaptation before truth could be safely or usefully received. This is so; and no part of this doctrine shall we lose; but we shall confirm it, and see its reason and its extent, by looking at the spiritual sense of this parable. Here, as so often when we attempt to apply the principles of correspondence, we must begin with regarding a truth, which we have been in the habit of regarding not as a truth, but as a pleasing analogy, which gives point to a moral, or may be used in an indefinite poetical way, — we must begin with regarding this truth as a truth; as a simple, certain, exact truth. It is such a truth, that we are only vessels, recipient of life. It is not more true, not more scientifically or more rigorously true, that a bottle is a vessel, containing the wine within it, than it is that a man is a vessel containing the life that is in him. So is

it true, that every thing which exists is such a vessel ; for every thing exists because a causative creative power and principle is within it, and fills it, and in this way makes it what it is.

This is a universal truth ; and connected with it is another universal truth ; which is, that every thing is what it is, because the causative principle is adapted by the One central Cause from whom all causes come, to make that thing what it is. A stone at our feet, is that stone, because it is a vessel which is recipient of an active cause, by which it is formed and by which it is filled, and the stone is only that cause so existing and manifested. And the whole manifestation and action of that creating and sustaining life, in that stone, is again determined by the form (or inmost nature) of that stone, which form was given to that stone that it might perform its required function.

Between the within and the without of the stone there is a perfect harmony ; and so there is in all existing things in all the realms of being, until we come to man. And here it is different. Here the bottle may be suited to the wine, or it may not be.

The stone, the tree, the animal, is what it is, and can be nothing but what it is. But the infinite love of God is not satisfied with this. All these lower things are created by infinite love which cannot but act, and in all its action is guided by infinite wisdom. And man is created the head, the heart, and the possessor of the universe, that the infinite love of God may be satisfied. Man exists, that a being may exist to which this love may impart itself, and its own happiness, in the greatest possible degree and with never ending enlargement. Man exists, that there may be beings to whom God may impart His own life, His own love, and His own happiness ; not as these exist in Him ; for there cannot be two Infinites, and therefore God cannot create another God ; not as they exist in stones, in trees or animals, for in these

there is a positive limit that may never be passed; but in as high a degree as may be possible; and therefore with the possibility of perpetual and never-ending increase and exaltation of that degree. And the divine love is satisfied exactly in the degree in which this end — the existence of beings receptive of divine life and happiness — is attained.

Whatever there may be in the divine life which it is impossible for us to know or conceive of, there are some things we may know, — some things which we are necessarily sure of if we have any real belief whatever that there is a God. The first of these is, that He must be a free and conscious Person. Free, to love, and to do and be what His love desires; and conscious of so loving, living and acting; and then we may know that His happiness is that of being thus free, thus acting, and thus conscious. Here there are certainly elements of the divine life; and here therefore must be elements of the life which divine love desires to impart to man.

The mineral kingdom cannot satisfy the divine love, because it is neither free nor conscious. Animals cannot satisfy the divine love, because, although conscious, they are not free. Human beings may satisfy the divine love, because they may be both free and conscious of their freedom.

A stone is only a vessel receptive of life, and a man is just as much so; because neither man nor any created existence can be any other thing than such a vessel; for the plain reason that there can be but one being or life that is Life in Itself; and all other being or life must be life received from that life.

We see therefore that a man does not differ from a mineral or an animal, in the fact that he is a vessel recipient of life; and we must look for the difference between them somewhere else. We find it in the fact, that a man has a power over himself, which nothing lower than man possesses. He, like all other things, is a vessel recipient of life; and of him it is true as of all other things, that what this life becomes in its

individuality and manifestation, depends upon the vessel. There the difference begins; it consists in the fact that he has a power over himself which nothing below man has. He is a vessel, only a vessel; but he is such a vessel and so recipient of life, that the life which he receives becomes *his own life*, and imparts to *him* the power of changing the quality, the character and the form of the recipient forms; he has therefore the power of becoming other than what he was when he began to be; and he alone has this power.

This power arises from the consciousness and the freedom which are given to him; they make him to be a human being; or, in other words, he is a human being because he is so created that they may be given to him and he may receive and possess them. He was thus made a human being, that the divine love which created him may not only flow into him but carry with it its own happiness. He is created in the image and likeness of God, that the divine life with its love, wisdom, power and happiness may flow into him. And he is created more and more into the image and likeness of God as these are permitted by him to become, without perversion, his own life. Whether they do this, or how far they do this, depends upon his form as a vessel recipient of life. And consciousness and freedom and personality are given him, that he may change this form; that he may for ever, by the perpetual change of this form for the better, co-operate with his Creator in building himself more and more into the image and likeness of God.

For this end consciousness and freedom are given; and for this end they are necessary and indispensable. And the love of God desires that they should be perfect; and that the happiness thence resulting should be consummate. But none of them approach perfection in the beginning of life; they are then permitted to be imperfect and qualified, to the end that they may attain to the highest possible perfection hereafter and retain it and grow in it for ever.

In this world, even the consciousness of man is obscured and limited ; he is indeed unconscious of the infinitely greater part of what is within him, or of his inner self. And of what he knows he sees the larger part only in such wise that the shadows of uncertainty sometimes rest upon it. So also his freedom, while here, is never perfect. It always exists ; it is always and mercifully preserved and protected. But the good, the eternal good of every man requires, that it should be, in some measure, qualified and restrained. They who have gone down to their place in the kingdom of falsehood and evil, would not find freedom, or consciousness of freedom, always a blessing. And therefore it is mercifully taken from them ; sometimes so taken that almost none is left. But these unhappy ones have their hold on us. And it is they who infuse the doubts which sometimes darken men's minds about human freedom, and the truth of human consciousness ; and it is they who prevail in the mind in which those doubts are confirmed.

This is the work of devils. Let us know that our freedom and our consciousness of freedom are somewhat restrained and obscured. But let us know why this is, and what is the measure of this restraint. Let us know, that man's freedom is qualified and restrained, just so far as that he may be influenced, guided, moved and led, sometimes by what seems to be compulsion, sometimes by what is compulsion as to conduct,—but always towards freedom. He is guided and led, but never forced to goodness, for the plain reason that it would not then be goodness. Often,—always when it is possible,—he is so led and guided, that he may be induced to compel himself voluntarily ; to compel his outer and worse man to obey his inner and better man. And it has already been said, that never is a man in so much freedom as when he is thus forcing himself into the right path. The lower the man is and the farther off from good, the more the assistance of God seems to be force. The higher he is, and the

nearer to goodness, the more it is seen and known and felt to be that which the love of God desires that it should always be, assistance to the man, in doing the work which the man loves. But only in the other life can this divine assistance wear its true aspect of the most tender mercy, of perfect love.

New wine must be put into new bottles. The effort of divine providence to impart new wine is constant. At times a great crisis occurs; a church passes away and a new one is given, by the outpouring of wine that is wholly new. But equally in great events like these, and in every event of every man's life, there is a divine endeavor to impart new wine; to make the truth which governs the life new, and, if much is not possible, then a little higher, better, purer, than it was before. But this cannot be, unless the man consents. It cannot be, unless the vessel be fitted for the wine. If the old truth be taken away, and the new truth is higher and better than can be recognized, obeyed and loved, then the vessel will be ruined and the wine will be lost; for what old truth the man had has lost its power, and the new truth cannot abide in his mind even if, for a moment, it seems to enter into it. Most merciful is the divine providence on this point; most watchful, that the wine shall not be changed, until the vessel is at least in some measure ready to let the old go, and receive and hold the new.

We have seen that in existences below man, the vessel is precisely suited to the life, and there is no conflict between what is within and what is without. This is certainly not the case with man; and sad is his condition when his consciousness does not tell him so. Is then this harmony not good, not desirable? On the contrary, it is the highest good. And as with consciousness and freedom, so with this harmony between the internal of the mind, and the external of the mind, the beginning is permitted to be poor and most defective, that the end may be better and eternal.

The eternal effort of Providence is to induce man to co-

operate with God in making the vessel ready for the wine, and so to permit God to fill it with new wine. To this end He always operates upon the internal of man, and lifts it somewhat higher, and teaches it somewhat more, and brings it into a somewhat better state than the external can at once respond to. But the divine purpose is, that the external should respond to it; that the man should use his freedom to compel his external to respond to it. Here may be difficulty and conflict; and there may be the distress and despair of fierce temptation. But if the external is moulded into conformity with the new internal; if the worldliness and self-seeking and self-trust and all lusts which oppose the new truth, give way before it, out of the night a day is born and out of the conflict, peace. That harmony then exists, for the sake of which the conflict was permitted. The vessel and the wine "both are preserved."

We have already and more than once said that the love of God is not satisfied by the dead or mineral kingdom; nor by animals. The reason is, that this divine love is infinite; and for the same reason it cannot be satisfied with men, until the highest degree of perfection is reached. It never is nor can be satisfied in one sense; never, so that its whole work is done and nothing more is desired. But it may be satisfied in another sense; and is so, when the progress is begun in a right direction, and is such a progress that it may continue and for ever and for ever advance towards perfection.

We may easily imagine a point in this progress, which it may be well to reflect upon; for this may help us to understand what the work is, and how it is done, and whither it tends. For this purpose let us ask ourselves to what conclusions the principles above stated would lead, if we suppose them carried out to a practical result; or, what are the angels whose life is conformed to them; how it is with their freedom, their consciousness, their sense of personality, and the harmony which pervades their whole being.

In the first place, their freedom is nearly perfect. They are governed only by their own love; there is so little in that which opposes the divine love, that the action of infinite power in and upon them seems only to be infinite help. It is no more felt as restraint or hindrance, than is the hand of the loving mother when she supports and guides the steps of her infant. Nor have they any fear that their freedom will be diminished. They know, and in the very centre of their hearts they feel, that their freedom is guarded with infinite love; and when the guidance of that love is most distinctly felt, then are they most grateful for the blessing.

And their consciousness of free and voluntary life and action is consummate. They have all the certainty of consciousness, that their freedom is the constant gift of a love which cannot fail nor err. They have a never-failing and never-doubting certainty that the divine life is in them, not merely as His life, but that it has come down and entered into them to become and always to continue their own life.

The most ancient eastern philosophy or religion (for they were one) exists in its fragmentary remains, only as it was in its last days, or when it had reached that degree of perversion that caused the divine providence to bring it to an end as a living and influential system. In these remains we may still find traces of great truths; but they are mingled with great falsities. A prevailing doctrine in those systems appears to be that of absorption; or, the doctrine that the highest perfection of the good man consists in that absorption into deity, or into the universal All, which wholly takes from him individual life and consciousness. This subject may be again considered; but here I would say something of it.

It is the central truth of all religion, that all life comes from God and re-ascends towards Him by growth in goodness. It is another truth that as all life is from Him and in its origin His, all evil life is His life perverted by the abuse of

human freedom, and all falsity His truth, so perverted. And then it is another truth, that the greatest falses are always perversions of the highest truths. And it may be said, that the human mind, in its worst conceivable condition, is incapable of imagining a more absolute or enormous falsehood than this doctrine of absorption; for this is the absolute perversion of the great truth, that all life is from Him, and returns to Him by being received and lived by man, without perversion.

And how foolish it is. It declares that a God of love invests us with the personality and individual consciousness upon which all happiness must depend, and leaves them with us a few years at this poor beginning of our being, and then, during all eternity takes them away; and with them the happiness which must rest upon them, and whatever of improvement or preparedness for more has grown out of our use of personality and consciousness; and takes them away, soonest and most completely from those persons who in obedience to the directions of God had become best fitted to enjoy personal happiness! It is indeed difficult to believe that any person ever really believed so foolish a falsehood. But if there are no limits to the possible ascent of the human soul, so it would seem that there are none to its possible descent. And it cannot be denied that there are those in the Christian community, or at least living among Christians, at the present day,—and not a very few of them,—and not persons without ability and influence, who hold, and more or less covertly teach, that there is no other immortality for men, but this absorption which is only an immortality of destruction.

But the angels, whom we have attempted to speak of, how far, how inexpressibly, how inconceivably far, are they from this delusion. Their whole life is one intense and perpetual consciousness of life, of freedom, and of personality.

Nor let it be supposed for a moment that this consciousness of personality is a belief in an illusion, mercifully permitted

to us here, and mercifully continued and strengthened hereafter. It is a just belief of a most absolute fact; of a fact as absolute as any fact can be.

I have known a man, who, if you told him that he had a hand, or an eye in his head, or that he walked the streets, would answer, it certainly seems so, but it is only seeming. And then, if you let him, he would unwind a chain of logic (or what he thought logic), to prove that all this was merely apparent and wholly unreal. I know too that such things are said in books. But I have never been able to suppose that any one ever believed this; or that the devils of doubt could ever so completely overcome all rectitude of understanding; or, that if they did so, there could be any escape from insanity.

As to the logic of the thing, neither this nor any chain of reasoning can bear even the semblance of logic, unless it found itself upon certain axioms, or assumptions of intuition or consciousness. All ratiocination must admit these, and begin with these, before it can take a single step. And there are no assumptions of intuition or of consciousness so strong as those which every man has of his own personality. And again I say, the reason of this is, that there is no more absolute and real fact than that of every man's own personality. But all logic of this kind, if it could come before the mind of angels, they would meet and crush by a higher and a truer logic, — by a logic founding itself upon the personality of God Himself.

I propose to consider this great topic again, in connection with the subject of *Proprium*; a word which can have no meaning to those who have not yet learned what is understood by it in the New Church; and which I shall endeavor presently to explain. Here I will only say, that they who cast from their minds all belief in the self-conscious personality of God, cast from their minds all belief in God. It may be difficult for us, while in this world, distinctly to impersonate

the Infinite; and in another place I may have something more to say of this difficulty and the cause of it, and the remedy for it. The angels find this difficulty vanish with the controlling influence of space and time. They know, as the centre of all knowledge, that He is an infinite, and yet a self-conscious person. And they know, as a fact upon which all other facts rest, that they also possess self-consciousness and personality, derived from Him and from His.

There is yet one other topic, which I have already considered, and must now speak of in reference to the angels; the harmony between their internal and their external; the correspondence between the divine life which enters into the inmost of their natures, and their affections, thoughts, wishes, acts and lives; the perfect fitness of the vessels for the wine which they contain. But the very greatness of the topic prevents my attempting to say much of it; large must be the volume which would give even the outlines of it; which would even define the internal and external and exhibit fully their relation to each other; which would show what is God's work and what is man's work, and how man's work is God's work in him, and yet is most truly, most really, man's own work.

Passing all this by, at least for the present, let me ask a reader to remember how an animal goes through his life. Born into all his instincts, he possesses by the mere fact of his nature, just the knowledges and just the volitions which he needs, and leads a life which is the constant exercise of those volitions as they act spontaneously through those knowledges.

And now let him imagine a man, — an angel, — all whose affections are those of good and of heaven and exactly suited to the uses which he loves and performs, and all whose knowledges are suited to bring those affections into the fullest exercise and enjoyment, and whose outward life is but a spontaneous indulgence of all his affections, by the means of

all his knowledges, and is yet the life of the exact determinate employment which he most loves and most enjoys. Doubt, obscurity, conflict have passed away; they have gone, and in their stead peace has come; peace, which is not rest or inactivity, but the peace of full, joyous and unimpeded life. Peace founded upon the certainty that his life is his own; a certainty which nothing can disturb, because it rests upon the certainty that it is God's life in him, given to him by God Himself, to be his own.

But it is not easy even to imagine all this; for this is that Peace of God which passeth all our understanding.

OF THE MAN WHO HAVING AN HUNDRED SHEEP LOST ONE;
AND THE WOMAN WHO HAVING TEN PIECES OF SILVER
LOST ONE.

12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.—MATT. xviii. 12, 13.

8 Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it*?

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.—LUKE xv. 8-10.

The parables of our Lord were spoken to His disciples for their instruction and are recorded for the instruction of all who read them. This is obvious and none deny or doubt it. But it should be an easy inference, and be as universally admitted, that the instruction thus conveyed must relate to the will of God in relation to man, and to His divine providence over man. Let us then endeavor to ascertain the

leading principles of this providence, to which these parables may seem to refer.

These principles, beginning with that which must be the centre of all, would seem to be these.

God desires the happiness of all; not of some but of all; and He desires that all should obey Him and should love Him that they may be happy.

He desires this always, and for ever. We have already seen how this desire operates after death even upon those who do not desire the good and the happiness He would give them. Here, we refer only to this life; and say that this desire that man should be happy continues to the end of every man's life without cessation or diminution; and that His endeavor to accomplish His desire and man's happiness continues also.

But, as has been repeatedly said, it is a necessary condition of the effecting this divine purpose, that man should co-operate with God, and do this in freedom. He therefore compels no man to be good; and has no desire that a man should make an apparent beginning of goodness, if it be apparent only, and if it will yield and pass away when brought to the test of reality, and so leave the man worse than he was before.

But while He, in fact, compels none, His acts and influences of assistance and guidance may put on the aspect of compulsion; may seem this, while the evils which He would remove, continue to oppose him.

And while He is always near to them who would be near to Him, he may seem to be afar off; He may withhold all consciousness of his assistance; He may thus wait until repentance becomes almost despair; He may thus stimulate to urgent and constant and agonizing solicitation, where He sees it to be well, thus to develop into greater clearness, and thus to strengthen into profounder and more abiding force, a longing for salvation from sin.

And when the final doom falls on man, he is judged by his

opportunities, and the measure of his ability. Hence, imperfect knowledge, encumbered by inherited evils, may yet be brought into exercise, and the germs of goodness cultivated, until they bear the fruits of peace.

And every man is permitted and encouraged and assisted to use all the means provided; not only the Word which God has given him, but all the events and circumstances of life; and all these are so governed and provided, that they may be used as means to this end.

But one thing is always necessary; it is that the love of good should give life and efficacy to the knowledge of truth; for without a love of the good which the truth teaches, the truth is dead, and worthless, or worse.

And then we reach the last, the essential, the universal, condition of all salvation from sin. It is, that the man shall become willing to deny himself; to deny his worship of self, his trust in self, and his love of self; to worship God; to trust in God; and to love God. For these are the universal laws of life; of all true life; and therefore of the life of all who are in heaven.

We have thus endeavored to give what we may call, if indeed we may venture to use such a phrase, the system of divine providence. How the parables already considered bear upon the principles of this system, the reader may judge. Now, let us endeavor to look at other parables in this connection.

The first principle stated was, that God desires the good and happiness of all men. And consider the parable of the woman who having ten pieces of silver lost one; see her seek diligently, until she finds it; and then her joy over her lost and found treasure. And look too at him who having an hundred sheep, loseth one; and see his anxious and earnest search for his lost sheep; and his rejoicing when he has found it. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over

ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." The man called together his friends and neighbors and rejoiceth with them. God calleth together his angels, and rejoiceth with them, and they rejoice the more because they know that their joy is His joy, given to them to be their joy.

He does not call them together especially for this purpose. His love and His wisdom have so called them together and so arranged them, that they form one harmonious whole which exists for this purpose. The whole life of heaven goes forth to assist every sinner to escape from his sins; and if he ceases to do evil and learns to do well, he also becomes an angel; he also takes his appointed place and his share in the work of heaven; and he thus adds to the joy, and to the strength of the whole heaven.*

But it is also said, that there is more joy over "one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." By the "just" here are meant those who think and call themselves just; and who therefore believe that they have no need of repentance. But they who are truly just, know their own need of repentance; know that this need is universal and constant, and that where there is no sense of sin and of repentance, the sense of self-justification is a thing to be most deeply repented of. And over such just persons as these, there can be no joy in heaven until repentance comes.

* There is a mistranslation in the received version of Matt. xviii. 13, which should be noticed. Instead of "Doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, to seek that which is gone astray?" it should be "Doth he not leave the ninety and nine upon the mountains, and goeth to seek that which is gone astray?" They who have not gone astray, have already been led by Him to the mountains and there they abide. But if one even of them leaves Him, leaves the mountains, and goeth down into dark valleys, even there He goeth to seek and to find him.

OF THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD.

1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house.

12 Saying, These last have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen. — MATT. XX. 1-16.

The divine desire for the good and for the happiness of all men continues to the very end of life. And this is true, as we have seen in what has been said of heaven and hell, even

if we remember that life never ends, and therefore this mercy cannot.

Some of the laborers in his vineyard were hired in the morning; some at the third hour; some at the sixth and ninth; and some only at the eleventh hour. All day long these last had stood idle. All day long he has permitted them to loiter outside of his vineyard and outside of his work. But all day long, his perfect wisdom has been so leading them, that they have become ready, at last. They did not feel his hand; they did not know his mercy; the treasure he was watching lay hid in the fields, the leaven in the heap; but the hour came; they could see him approach; they could listen to his call; they could enter into his vineyard and do his work. Then, "Shall he do not what he will with his own"? What *can* he will, except to give, with overflowing measure, all that can be received? What can he will, except to give "to his own" children, his own love, his own wisdom, his own happiness, with no other limitation but that imposed by the willingness and therefore the ability of the man to receive so much of the blessing and no more.

While nothing in the word of God, and no truth ever presented to the mind of man, justifies or counsels delay, or makes it other than dangerous and very dangerous, yet the mercy of God would not be what it is, if the door were not kept open to the last hour; open, always, to him who is at last willing to enter therein; open always, but entered, at the first hour or the last, only by him who, in the sincerity of an honest heart, turns from the error of his ways and desires to obey the will of God. "A man had two sons; he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered I will not, but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that

the publicans and the harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you." And when the next verse is read, in which the reason for this is given, "For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him," let it be remembered that John represents, means, and stands for the repentance which he preached.

It is for man to choose, whether he will indulge his natural proclivities to evil, or make war upon them; and it is better that he should not enter upon this warfare, and do the work in such wise that it is not really done; and drive the devils away for a season, only that they should return sevenfold in number and in force. Better is it, that he should not be as one who begins to build and counteth not the cost, and is not able to finish it; or as him who is not able to meet with ten thousand him who cometh against him with twenty thousand.

It has been said, that while He in fact compels none, his assistance may seem to be compulsion. As, at the marriage supper, when they who were bidden would not come, — the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind were summoned; and because there was still room, the servants of the Lord went out into the highways, and compelled them to come in. They who were bidden, are those to whom all opportunities of instruction are given, who know all the words of invitation, and will not listen. But the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind, are those who know that they are so, and deplore it; who feel a deep consciousness how poor they are in all that constitutes the wealth of the soul, how maimed is their life, how lamely they walk in the paths of goodness, how blind they are to the light of truth. They expect no invitation to the supper of the Lamb; but when it reaches them, gladly do they accept it. But there is yet room, for infinite mercy cannot be exhausted. And there are many who wander in the highways of common life, conscious of no

desire to tread the path to heaven, but who are, in God's own way and time, drawn into that path, by means and motives which act upon them with seeming violence ; nor, when they reach this better state of mind and remember their own forgetfulness of God or their opposition to Him, can they feel otherwise than as if they had been plucked from the burning with a strong hand, and compelled to change their course and their life, by a kind, but an irresistible force. They cannot yet see, that this force was only perfect love, operating with perfect wisdom on their love, and leading to a change of their affections and their life, by their own voluntary self-compulsion.

While He is always near, He may seem to be far off. He may indeed wait, not only until the last hour, but He may wait, or seem to wait, even if the cry for help be like that of the importunate widow, "who cometh continually," ever praying that He "would avenge her of her adversary." But He has not waited ; He is not an unjust judge ; it was He inspired that prayer for help ; it is His love which desires that this prayer may be constant, urgent, and perpetual. And He utters this parable, couching it in forms so external that they may reach the lowest and most external mind, to the end, — as is expressly declared, — that it may teach them, that "men ought *always* to pray, and not to faint. Never faint ; never despair." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow," if the stains be cleansed away by the tears of repentance.

What human mind has yet measured, what human heart yet fathomed, the infinite tenderness of the parable of the prodigal son ? What words can make more clear that infinite mercy which, on the first return of the son who has done all that man can do to make himself unworthy and unwelcome, — goes forth to meet him, gladly, rejoicingly, and runs to him, and falls upon his neck, and kisses him ? With what eager welcome was this "son who was dead and is alive again" folded in the arms of perfect love !

THAT WHAT ENTERETH THE MAN DOES NOT DEFILE.

14 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him, can defile him : but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also ? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him .

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats ?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness :

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. — MARK vii. 14–23.

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand.

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man ; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. — MATT. xv. 10, 11.

While the Word of God is full of instruction and rebuke for the proud and presumptuous, it is as full of consolation and promise for the humble, and for those who are suffering from the deep sense of their unworthiness. And much instruction is given to protect men from those undue anxieties which the Enemy — the accuser of the brethren — seeks to infuse into the minds of those whom he cannot otherwise make unhappy. Probably no one who desires to be good is free from sorrow at the evil thoughts and fantasies and lusts which rush unbidden into his mind, and make him fear that they indicate ruling principles in his character. For such

persons was spoken the parable which tells us that it is not what entereth into a man that defileth him, but what goeth out. Our Lord himself so far explained this parable as to lift it above the merely sensuous meaning. He permits us now to know a higher meaning. To know that evil thoughts and fantasies and lusts could not indeed be awakened within us, if they were not already within us, ready to awake. That they may therefore help us to know in what sense we of ourselves are all evil, and only evil; but that no man suffers permanently for any evil which he does not make his own by choice and voluntary indulgence.

All the evils of his whole long line of ancestry are in every man; they are in him as tendencies to evil; as a whole they constitute the character in its germ and tendency; and this character remains for ever uneffaced and undestroyed, however it be hidden and unknown. But every man's conscious self is finally formed of only those thoughts and affections which have been made personally and individually his own, by his own voluntary adoption, indulgence, and confirmation. Evils not thus adopted and confirmed, do not become sins; they do not defile the man; they are suppressed and hidden by the mercy of God, excepting so far as they may sometimes come forth into one's own knowledge in the heavens as they do on earth. There, to freshen the angel's recognition of himself, and of the divine mercy which has saved him from himself. Here, to tell us what we might be if God were not on our side, and what we shall be if we do not co-operate with His influence and become better. But with this lesson this parable gives us also the assurance that His help is near and ready, and that by it we may resist and put away these evils; that they have not yet defiled us, and that we may escape their defilement.

And the parable tells us yet something more. It tells us that what thus entereth in, if it be not assimilated and made a part of the man, passes out and then "purgeth all meats"

It is for this very purpose that they are permitted to enter in. The devils are permitted to excite these thoughts and lusts, that we may resist and overcome them, with the full knowledge of what we are liable to; and by thus putting these evils away cleanse our whole life. Man is judged by his opportunities and the measure of his ability. The parables of the ten pounds, and the five talents, exhibit this so clearly that nothing need be added. All is summed up in the declaration, that "the servant which knew his lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few." One remark however should be made. It is, that this repeated statement of the justice of God in comparing all that a man has done with all that he could do, offers the strongest rebuke to the falsity which would persuade us that an arbitrary foredooming has fixed for all their final fate, long before they existed. And thankful may we be, that while this falsity lingers in the creeds and on the lips of men, it has lost much of its power upon the hearts. It is the desire of God, it is the will of God, that all men should become good. It is impossible that any man should be good, but with his own consent and co-operation; and here therefore is the limit to Omnipotence. But never does the love of God cease to desire that every man should become good, or better than he is, and never does it cease to act for that purpose. Every man that lives is as a fig-tree planted by the Lord to bear fruit. And even when it refuses to bear fruit, the divine patience waits, and "digs about it and manures it, and if it bear fruit, well; if not,"—when all is done that can be done and all is done in vain,—it must be cast out of the vineyard.

Imperfect knowledge may be brought into exercise, and the germs of goodness cultivated, until they become fruitful.

This, which is a general truth, is particularly applicable to the various churches or dispensations of religious truth which

have existed upon earth. In all of them, their members are judged by the instruction they have received. If they have made a good use of this instruction, it is well ; and otherwise it is not well. Hence the desire and effort to spread the knowledge of Christianity among the heathen should be founded not on the belief that they who knew not Christ cannot be saved ; but that it is a good thing, so good as to deserve our best endeavors, to give to the heathen truth and faith which may have more power to save them and lift them into a higher condition of thought, affection and life, than any thing which any form of heathenism can impart.

OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor ?

30 And Jesus answering, said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way ; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was : and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him : and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves ?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. — LUKE x. 29-37.

Our Lord, after stating the two great commandments, replies to the question, "Who is our neighbor?" He is most our neighbor who is most filled with neighborly love ; with

that love which is the universal form of the love to God, and is universally taught in every church which has the power of salvation. A priest of the Jewish church, authoritatively and directly established by God, should have been, more than any other, filled with this love; should have been this neighbor. But he was false to the teaching of his church and therefore he was not this neighbor, but passed by on the other side. So also of the Levite. But the Samaritan, with less than their advantages, had more than their goodness. The love of the neighbor which his church inculcated, he had received; and therefore he showed this love now, by acting as this neighbor towards the poor sufferer, who needed his help.

Such is the general meaning and instruction of this parable. Like every other parable, and all the words our Lord spake, it may be understood not only in yet higher senses, but its meaning may be made more specific by a brief consideration of some of the details of the parable. Possibly, it may be found to have a peculiar bearing on our own times, and our own duties.

Jerusalem was the centre and heart of the Holy Land. Jericho was a city near to Jordan; it was the first city found by those who, coming to the Holy Land from the eastward, crossed the Jordan. The river Jordan was the boundary of the Holy Land in the strictest application of that name. As all water, by a universal correspondence denotes truth, or things of the understanding, the river Jordan denotes the bounding, or elementary, or introductory truths of a church, or of religion. It was with this meaning, that Naaman the Syrian was commanded by the prophet Elisha, if he wished to be clean of his leprosy to wash *seven times* in Jordan. And while Naaman believed that "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, were better than all the waters of Israel" he turned, and went away in wrath, and remained unclean. But when he yielded, and "went down" from his

false and foolish pride and self-exaltation, and dipped seven times in Jordan, "his flesh came unto him *like unto the flesh of a little child*, and he was clean." "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child* shall not enter therein."

A city denotes doctrine. A city is a place which men have built or taken possession of, in which they may live together as in their homes. Spiritually, it is a doctrine which men have formed or have received, in which they may live together in agreement and all feel as in their homes. This is the signification of city throughout the Scripture; thus the city of the New Jerusalem in the Apocalypse denotes the doctrine, in its complex, now descending from heaven, to form a new church; and in the spiritual world cities are so formed and so inhabited. But Jericho, the first city found by those who cross the Jordan from the sunrising, means the doctrine formed of introductory truths. Jericho, when in the hands of the heathen, meant the exact opposite, or the doctrine of falsehood. And the way in which its walls fell before the trumpets of Joshua signifies the way in which these falsehoods fall before the utterance of divine truth. But the meaning of Jericho as a part of the Holy Land is, an early or introductory doctrine of religious truth.

The man in the parable was going from Jerusalem to Jericho. He represents one who, from a love of good, is seeking to learn the doctrine which shall teach him what good is, and how to begin a truly good life.

He fell among thieves. Thieves, spiritually, are thieves of spiritual property; of what is true and good; of true thoughts, and good affections. These thieves stripped him, and wounded him, and left him half dead.

They stripped him when, by their falsities, they wrested what truths he possessed from his mind; for truths are the garments of affections. Throughout the Bible, garments and clothing bear this sense. Of the innumerable instances

which might be cited to illustrate this correspondence I content myself with the following.

In the 104th Psalm, ver. 2, it is said of the Lord, "Who coverest thyself with light as a garment," and in ver. 6 "Thou coveredst it (the earth) with the deep as a garment." How well this illustrates a correspondence meeting us as constantly in New Church writings as light and water meet us in actual life! The divine wisdom is the garment or clothing of the divine love. Its first natural form is light, the correspondence between which and truth has always been seen, and preserved in common language, as when one says, "I see that," meaning, "I understand it." Hence, light is the vesture of God. But when the divine Creator comes lower down into nature, the solid world is the general correspondent of all the affections produced by the influx of His love, and the liquid world that of the truths and thoughts caused by the influx of His wisdom. These last are the garments of the former; hence, the earth "is covered with the deep as a garment."

In the instances stated in the gospel, where the sick were cured if they could but touch the hem of his garment, it must be remembered that when multitudes thronged him "virtue went out of Him," only to those who, with faith in Him, touched the hem of His garments. And it always goes forth to heal and bless those who, with faith in Him, lay their hands on His truths, or His words, on any which they can understand and obey, although only the least and outermost; only the hem of His garment.

When our Lord was crucified, the soldiers fulfilled the "Scripture which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots." The word translated vesture means the inner garment, worn next the body; the word translated raiment means the outer garment. This inner garment was "without seam; woven from the top throughout;" it corresponds to and represents the internal

sense of the Word, which is without seam, or not made in parts, but woven from the top throughout, as one continuous web of truth from the infinite source and summit of all truth. This has been mercifully preserved through all the corruptions of the church, that it might not be rent asunder; preserved from knowledge when this knowledge must have been perverted and falsified. But the outer garment, the literal sense, has been delivered to men's hands, and they have torn it into fragments, and divided these fragments among themselves. There never yet was a heresy that did not rest upon, or suppose that it rested upon, some texts of Scripture, torn from their connections, and so wrested from their true meanings.

Finally, the saved, who were clothed in white robes, are said to be those "who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The blood of the Lamb signifies His holy, and divine Truth; and only by receiving this in faith and love, and permitting it to cleanse away our sins, can the garments of our Soul be washed white.

The thieves also wounded this poor man. They wounded him when they struck at his affections; at whatever love of good he possessed, and wounded that. And they left him half dead, because they had taken all they could of the life of his understanding and of his affections.

Wofully does this poor man need help. From whom shall he have it?

In the texts preceding this parable, our Lord had given the two great commandments of love to God, and love to the neighbor. The priest should have been the minister of, and should have corresponded to, the first; and the Levite should have been the servant of, and corresponded to, the second. But they were the priest and the Levite of a perverted, corrupted, desolated church. Their love to God and to the neighbor were such loves as prevailed in that church. They

could not help this sufferer, and they had no desire to help him ; they passed by the other way.

Because Samaria was between Judea and the heathen world around, and occupied this middle place also in religious belief and observance, the Samaritan corresponds to one who, although a heathen, is yet not without some true and regenerative religious influence. He may represent one who is nominally within, or nominally without the church ; if only he has some knowledge of the truths of religion, and loves them, and lives in accordance with them.

Therefore he bound up the wounds of the dying man, and dressed them with oil and wine ; or with whatever he had of the heavenly truth which radiates from love of goodness, or of the spiritual truth which teaches in a lower way how to love the neighbor.

And he set him on his own beast. Every animal used by man to bear him along paths and roads, corresponds to the faculty of the human understanding which men possess to advance along the truths and doctrines which are as pathways for the mind. And here again the Bible is full of illustrations of this correspondence, on which I will not delay. The Samaritan who sets the sufferer on his own beast, is one who gives to such a sufferer all the help he can from his own understanding, and bears him along to a condition, or into relations, where he may receive more help.

The Samaritan carried him to an inn, and left him there, and invoked for him the help he needed, and, in his humble way, proved his desire that this help should be given.

The Samaritan represents one who cannot himself do much, or at least not all, and knows that what he can do is only the beginning, and that more is needed ; but who gladly does all he can.

An inn offers a home for the wayfarer, while he needs it, and supplies him with food and drink and the means of rest. And it represents that, or them, who gladly meet the spiritual

wayfarer, and supply his soul with the food and drink and rest it requires, and thus endeavor to perfect his cure if he be wounded or sick. To such hands as these, they whom the Samaritan represents bear such a sufferer as this.

There are many now going from Jerusalem to Jericho; many who are now moved by a desire to be better than they are, to seek, in this revelation of new truth, the means of becoming better. And many are the thieves who lie in wait for the wayfarer, and when he comes within their reach, assail him, and strip him, and wound him, and leave him half dead? If we meet one upon whom this suffering and this peril have fallen, can we forget the lesson of this parable? Will we not do for them all that we know how to do, and gladly lead them within the reach of influences which may do more?

THE PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

19 There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day :

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table : moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom : the rich man also died, and was buried ;

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed ; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot ; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house :

28 For I have five brethren ; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham : but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.—
LUKE xvi. 19–31.

While every event of a man's life, and all of his surroundings, may be made the means of salvation, the central means which makes all others effectual, is the Word of God. The rich man, in hell, prayed that Lazarus might be sent to his father's house, to testify unto his five brethren, "lest they also come to this place of torment. Abraham said unto him, . . . They have Moses and the prophets ; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, Father Abraham ; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

The sufficiency of the Bible is here emphatically stated ; but far more than its sufficiency is true. The Bible must needs be as much better adapted for the instruction of men than any thing taught by the declarations of created beings, as infinite wisdom is more than finite wisdom. For the Bible is the Word of God ; it is infinite wisdom itself, adapting itself to every possible state of created existence capable of receiving truth. It is the Word of God, uttered by Him for that very purpose.

It may be said in reply, If this be so, why do we learn from Swedenborg ; why do we believe his declarations which do most certainly purport to add important facts to those disclosed by the Bible ?

The answer is, that the Bible is absolutely sufficient, and perfectly adapted to bring men into the state or condition of

mind, both intellectually and affectionally, in which they may learn truths which are the beginning and foundation of all truth. And when these are learned and loved, more may be taught. And as the influence of the Bible increases among men, God's gifts to them, by such means as He may see to be the best, may increase indefinitely. Always however, this will be the test. Whatever is told in any way, if it contradicts, or contemns, or disregards the Bible, or lays it aside, must be false; and only that which perfectly accords with the Bible, and increases our knowledge and sense of its sanctity, and makes it more luminous, and more plainly the source of light, can be true.

"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." If they hear not the Bible, it is because their opposition to truth is such that it cannot reach them. But could not other truth reach them; and why has not Omnipotence given more definite instruction concerning the other world than any thing contained in the Bible? The reply to this question requires some consideration of a most important principle.

It is this; that Truth, of any kind, or any amount, is, by itself, of no value, and may be harmful. The absolute demonstration of this, for those who believe in God and in his divine providence, may be found in the fact, that He does not give truth of any kind to men, excepting slowly, gradually, and under many veils. Of course it might be otherwise. If it were His will, truth and all truth might be written on the clouds, or leaves, or stones, or spoken by every breath of wind; or offer itself spontaneously to the human intellect. In point of fact, men are left as it were to grope their way; but are aided at every step, and always guided in the right direction if they are willing to be guided, and while they can advance only slowly and gradually, that advance may be permanent and perpetual.

For this universal law of divine providence, there must be a

reason ; and it must be God's reason ; and therefore it must satisfy perfect love and wisdom. All the love and wisdom within this reason, or this providence, we cannot see ; but something of it we may see. We may see that truth, of itself, is never an end, but always a means ; always a means to good which is always the end. But while it is conceivable that all truth might be flashed upon the mental eye at once, it is not conceivable that man should become good excepting by the use of his own freedom ; and not otherwise than by the gradual process of putting his evils away and confirming and enlarging by choice and practice his love of the opposite goodness. Truth, with no love for the good which it inculcates, is the brilliant and barren light of winter which neither looks on life nor brings life.

This being the constant and universal end of divine providence, we may now see why truth is given, first, only in the quantity and degree in which it may best be given ; and secondly, that it must be given in the form and manner best adapted to making men grow better in their affections and life, and so able to receive safely more truth.

If those who are represented by the five brethren will not hear the Bible, they might still be persuaded by overwhelming evidence, to believe the facts of another life ; but they could not be persuaded to believe these in a good way, or to a good end. If they could receive truth as it should be received, and use it as it should be used, they would receive it from the Bible ; and if their minds were in that healthy condition, and truth was received from other sources, it would be received because it was guarded by its recognition of and its reverence for the Bible, from becoming the minister of evil.

In these days, truths, or statements concerning the life after death, are offered by what is called Spiritualism, which I like better to call Spiritism. This *may* be (I do not know that it is) something other than a mere falsehood, whatever

amount of falsehood be mingled with it. But with all its activity, and its unquestionably wide diffusion, and its extreme attractiveness for many minds, the great majority do still reject it and utterly deny its truth. The causes of this rejection are numerous. Some persons reject it from simple inability to believe that any thing spiritual or preternatural exists; others from mere indifference; this world is every thing to them, and they have no thought nor care for any thing beyond it. Others, because it is obvious that there is an enormous amount of illusion and fraud and falsehood mingled with it, and they do not believe that this mass of chaff contains a single grain of wheat. Others, because they see much of folly in what it calls its revelations, and an entire absence of all that can give clearness and force to any true religious sentiment, and they are certain that if it is not made in this world it comes from below, and they cannot suppose that new gates of hell are opened.

We have not the slightest wish to lessen the number of those who, for any reason, reject spiritism. But, after much inquiry into, and some observation of its facts and evidence, we are not able to deny, that after the mass of fraud, falsehood, folly, and delusion, which we have already called enormous, is swept away, there may still remain a residuum of fact.

We are told by Swedenborg, that in the remote past, there was much knowledge of the other world and its relations to this, and much intercourse between these worlds. As time passed, and goodness decayed, this knowledge and intercourse gradually degenerated into a kind of magic, and at length, as the condition of mankind became such that this intercourse would surely be perverted and injurious, the veils between the worlds were thickened, and nearly all intercourse arrested. In the early histories of most nations, we have narratives of magical rites and effects, of oracles and the like, which it has been of late years customary to consider as mere falsehood

and juggling. They were so in great part, no doubt; they may have been so altogether; but modern clairvoyance and spiritism suggest that similar things may have been known and done in ancient times.

If it be asked why a thing so likely to become evil, and evil only, and once suppressed on that account, is now again permitted, the answer is, that now also new truth is given, and new influences are descending to earth, by means of which this evil may be resisted, and the thing itself eventually made useful. We live in this world, between heaven and hell. Influences from above and from below meet and mingle in every thing of earth, and almost every thing of our earthly life. By this conflict or this mingling an equilibrium is produced, and our freedom is preserved; and through this freedom, *only* through this freedom, can our work be done. Sometimes the good and sometimes the evil prevails, but seldom, if ever, does either now prevail to the entire exclusion of the other. All changes of this kind are governed by the wisdom and the love which always provide for our well-being, and always are ready to guide and lead us but not to force us. The coming of the New Church seemed almost to require an opposite; and finds it, as we think, in Spiritism.

But unmixed evil, or that which must of necessity result in evil, is not permitted. And already we can see — so at least it seems — good mingled with the evil which Spiritism causes. It breaks up the indurated unbelief which threatened to extinguish in many minds all possibility of believing more than animals do. It produces doubt and inquiry, and may thus open an entrance for truth. It may lead those who could be led by nothing higher away from merely sensuous naturalism; and not so far towards the denial of God and the worship of self, but that they may retain the capacity of learning the truth in another life, if not in this.

One great danger, and perhaps the greatest, of Spiritism, springs from a falsehood of which the New Church offers direct

and adequate correction. It is the common belief, that if any thing come from another world, it must come with authority ; it must be true. This belief itself arises from the utter ignorance not only of what the other world is, but of its existence. When persons wholly devoid of truth in this respect are first persuaded that there is another world, they can hardly avoid the belief that light must be unclouded and unmingled there, and that he who speaks from beyond the grave must necessarily know, and speak, only what is true.

We have in our language the two words, supernatural, and preternatural, and they are used as if they meant the same thing ; indeed we have never noticed, either in what we have read or heard, any difference between them. We ought to have a third word, Subternatural. A thing may be preternatural, or come from beyond nature ; but whether it is good or bad, true or false, depends upon whether it comes down to us from above nature, and then we may call it Supernatural, or up to us from below nature, and then it should be called Subternatural.

All men learn by death, the fact of another world. But, as has been already said, they learn from this fact, and from the laws and beings and life they see there, very different things. Bad men find in all that they can see only confirmations of all their evils and all their falsehoods. And if such persons are permitted to communicate with men on earth, they may tell the new things they have learnt ; but if they have learned only the new things which suit their character, the things they have to tell, and love to tell, and believe to be entirely true, will tend to form only such a character as their own.

All men learn by death the fact of another life ; the time must therefore come to all when they know it ; and it is of very little importance whether this fact alone be learned a little sooner or a little later. But it is of vast importance, that this fact be learned at such time, in such a way, and in

such a form, as shall build up in the mind an affinity for the good, and an aptitude to live with the good in happiness hereafter. It is of comparatively little importance how much of the details of another life one learns in this life; but it is of transcendent and inexpressible importance, that what he learns should accord with the instruction of that Word of God, which is to be the guide and guard of his eternal life, if that life be not spiritual death.

It is however a common belief that the Scriptures tell us nothing about the other life; the Old Testament not even declaring, and the New Testament only declaring, the fact of that life. And the question has been asked, Why should the five brethren be persuaded by "Moses and the prophets" to believe what neither Moses nor the prophets ever say?

There is some error in this. The three churches, the Israelitish, the first Christian, and the second or new Christian Church, stand to each other in a serial relation, on this point, as on all others. To the first or Israelitish Church a Word was given, in which God spake, in the letter, for the most part, to merely natural men and in merely natural forms. In this Word, the existence and sovereign power of the One God was asserted with all the force which human words could supply; because this is the first fact which natural men must learn that they may cease to be natural. And the laws of life were added, in some form and with some sanctions as might best help men to ascend from the depths of naturalness.

To the first Christian church a Word was given, which was addressed to men who might acquire a knowledge of, and attain to an obedience to spiritual truth. And this truth brings man into the very presence of God, because it teaches that God has come down, personally, into the very nature and person of a man, and so lived among men. And it teaches the resurrection into a future life, with absolute unreserve.

To the New Church no new Word is given; but new senses of the Word are given, which show that the Word contains the infinite wisdom of God. The truths of this New Church are addressed to those who may attain unto a knowledge of, an obedience to, and a love for heavenly truth. It discloses the relation of man to his Creator, and of this world to the other; and it gives abundant details illustrative of this relation. It is not however true that Moses and the prophets give no information as to spiritual life; for it is true that from them, aided by the Gospels, much information has been given, much, which in all ages has been, and still is, received.

Angels are spiritual beings whose home is heaven. Innumerable passages even in the Old Testament represent them as appearing in the human form, and as speaking and acting as men; and in some, they are called alternately men or angels, as if one of these names applied to them as much as the other; as in Genesis xix., where the angels who came to Lot are so designated. In the Gospels are many passages, in which it is said that the good, in the other life, shall be as the angels of heaven; and in the Apocalypse, the angel refused the worship offered by John, saying unto him, "I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book;" thus distinctly asserting that angels are brethren of the prophets, and that the book was written for angels as well as men. From all this testimony there has undoubtedly existed in all ages, and still exists with the simple-minded, — even in this age, when prevailing unbelief has wrapped most thinking men in the darkness of midnight, — a firm belief, or, if we use a word used in the parable we are speaking of, an undoubting "persuasion," that angels are glorified human beings, and that men who go to heaven where angels are, become angels with them.

Swedenborg gives to us many details, and in some instances

on some points minute details, of life in the other world ; and "Spiritism" purports to do the like ; and the details thus given differ in many respects, and the laws of spiritual life given by Spiritism differ totally from those given by Swedenborg. Both we cannot believe. Which shall we believe ? Let us answer this question by applying the test suggested by this parable. Let us see which testimony accords best with "Moses and the prophets," and, we add, the Gospels.

In the first place, Swedenborg asserts, as strongly as is possible, the sanctity and authority of the Bible. Next, he declares that there is one personal God, the creator of the whole universe, spiritual and natural. Then, that this God came to earth, and in the Virgin Mary put on a human nature, and made it divine, or One with the Father ; and thus became Immanuel, or God with us, with all men, and with all the angels of all the heavens, for ever. Lastly, that there is no real happiness, and through all eternity never can be, except in acknowledging, obeying, and loving Him, and in loving the neighbor because all men are brethren and His children, and all the good in them is His good. And all the statements of Swedenborg, and all the information which he gives us concerning the spiritual world, accord with and illustrate these principles.

Upon all these points, we apprehend that Spiritism is the exact antagonist of Swedenborg. So far as I have been able to gather its prevalent principles from its writings, which are seldom clear, and sometimes seem to be otherwise designedly, these principles cannot be better described, than by calling them the precise opposites of those above stated as the principles of Swedenborg. Spiritism ranks the Bible with other books, and regards it as full of errors and deficiencies, and as having no more sanctity and authority than other human productions, and decidedly postpones it to the revelations of "The Spirits." It denies that there is any personal God, or any other God but the universal All, or Nature. It regards

our Lord and Saviour as one among men, differing from other men in no essential particular of origin, or function, or character. And it teaches that life in the other world is one of constant and universal improvement for all men, to all alike and equally, to all by the development of merely human powers, the enlightenment of human reason, and the cultivation of human nature, but of course without divine influence or help, because there is no God, from whom such influence or help could come. And the statements of Spiritism and the information which it gives us concerning the spiritual world, accord with and illustrate these principles.

What our conclusion is as to the preference to be given to Swedenborg or to Spiritism, after thus testing them by Moses and the prophets and the Gospels, need not be said. But it should be added, as an inevitable result of this comparison, that it is not a question of preference between two sources of information, from both of which something may be learnt. It is a question of rejection. For if Swedenborg is received, Spiritism must be rejected, as having no authority; as imparting no instruction which may make one "wise unto salvation."

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them :

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil ; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so* ; lest there be not enough

for us and you : but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came ; and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage : and the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. — *MATT. xxv. 1-13.*

In the explanation of the preceding parable, and often elsewhere, it has been said that truth, of itself, has no value. It is a means to an end. The end is the love of good. And where there is nothing of this love within the truth, it has no tendency to lead to this end, and therefore has no value, and soon perishes.

Vividly is this principle presented in the parable of the ten virgins. All of them had lamps ; all of them possessed the instruments of light ; for a lamp always and obviously — as where it is said, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet” — represents an instrument of guiding truth. But only half of them had oil with their lamps. Oil, as a liquid, belongs to the general division of what is intellectual ; but it is more than drink, it is food ; and while it means truth, it means heavenly truth ; it means truth flowing from and instinct with the life of a love for the highest good, for God. They who have this truth, have “oil in their vessels with their lamps.” And only they who have this oil with their lamps are admitted to the wedding.

The midnight cry was heard ; the day was wholly ended ; the day in which man should do his work. When it is done, the judgment comes ; and according to this judgment, some enter into the wedding, and some do not.

The wedding means heaven. It is a wedding between what is true and what is good ; it takes place when what is known

as true is also loved as good; when what is known as true is loved because it teaches good and leads to good.

In the supreme and infinite sense this marriage exists between the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom, for they are perfectly united, and perfectly one. From this divine union comes down the conjugal principle by which all creation is produced and governed. It is this divine union which enters into every good marriage, which causes them who are thus married to be "no more twain but one flesh," and makes a good and genuine marriage the source and consummation of all blessedness. And it is opposition to this divine union, which makes adultery, and every act and lust and concupiscence leading to adultery, infernal and destructive. For whatever leads to adultery, in act, or desire, or thought, of any kind or any degree, comes from hell, and carries back into hell whatever it can destroy by its poison.

To the heavenly marriage they cannot enter in who have no oil in their lamps,—for it has not entered into them. They may, like those virgins, demand to enter in, they may have abundant truth, and trust to "faith alone;" but their faith, because it was not vivified and made heavenly by the love of the good which the faith inculcates, finds no open door.

OF THE FIVE TALENTS.

14 *For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth. — MATT. xxv. 14-30.

It may be remarked that this parable directly follows that of the ten virgins. It begins, "For it is," &c., the *it* referring to the kingdom of heaven just above spoken of; thus connecting the two parables. He who had five added to them other five, or acquired the corresponding affections; he that had two did likewise; and both of these entered into the joy of their lord. But he who had but one, and left that one barren and fruitless because its correlative one of affection was not added to it, lost even that, or all his truth, and was cast into outer darkness, or suffered the deprivation of all truth.

This parable closes with a phrase, elsewhere also used which may be briefly explained: "There shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth." The human body is the clothing and form of the human soul, and this is in the image of the Divine form; and this is true of even the minutest particular of the human body. In a sound and healthy body, the teeth receive the food, and comminute it, and prepare it by mixture with digestive fluids for the processes by which it becomes assimilated and appropriated. They represent and denote those truths which investigate whatever is received in the mind, and begin the preparation which ends in its becoming nourishment for the mind. For the evil man, the same thing is done, but now in an evil and perverted way. The teeth are now the falsities which begin the preparation of all that is learned, by adapting it to his own perverted condition. It is the working of these falsities, ever active in a mind that has become infernal and ever laboring to bring all that is learned or known or thought into a condition to nourish the prevailing and characterizing falsehood, which is meant by this gnashing of teeth.

PARABLE OF THOSE WHO CHOSE OUT THE CHIEF ROOMS
AT THE FEAST.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—LUKE xiv. 7-11.

A virtue which opposes itself distinctly to all evil and falsity is humility. The root of all evil and falsity is the love of self; and the essence of humility is the renunciation of self. But humility means many different things; or rather it assumes many different aspects. It may be humility before our fellow-men, or humility before God; and each of these forms of humility exists and displays itself on various planes, and in different ways on these different planes. In the parables which remain to be considered, we shall see how instruction is given us in regard to this duty of humility, upon all planes, from the lowest to the highest.

He who is bidden to a wedding is told not to take the highest place, lest this place be taken from him and given to one who assumed for himself a lower one. And in this a lesson of humility is taught in the plainest words, which every man in every circumstance of life may profitably remember.

In the spiritual sense more is taught. The wedding, and the invitation to it means, as before and elsewhere, that marriage of the good and the true, which constitutes genuine and heavenly goodness. They who feel themselves invited to this wedding must especially beware of assumption, and pride, and self-admiration, and depreciation of their neighbors. The reason given is, that he who exalteth himself shall be abased, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted. In common earthly matters this *may* be so. In spiritual matters, it *must* be so. The reason is, that the life of heaven is God's own love and life received in heaven, and by all there known to be His life, His gift of Himself; that all genuine love of good is God's own love received in man and not perverted there; that the love of self for the sake of self is the exact antagonist of God's love, and love to God. It follows necessarily that every man in whom truth and good are falsified and perverted by this self-love, and by that form of this self-love which we call pride and self-admiration, *must* be, because God is merciful, brought down into a condition in which

whatever of truth or good there is in him may be delivered from this overmastering evil, which would pervert it all.

THE RICH MAN WHOSE GROUND BROUGHT FORTH
PLENTIFULLY.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully :

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ?

18 And he said, This will I do : I will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee : then *whose* shall those things be which thou hast provided ?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. — LUKE xii. 16–21.

In this parable instruction is given which while, in its literal sense, it purports to rebuke the sin of covetousness, in its spiritual sense, is similar to that of the parable of those who chose the chief places at a wedding. The rich man feels oppressed with the weight of his own riches. He says, What shall I do ? I have no room where to bestow my fruits." The spiritually rich, whose ground brings forth plentifully, is he who surveys his own life, and sees it full of all truth and all good ; he is oppressed by the burden of his own excellence ; he builds greater barns by enlarging the consciousness and self-complacency which enfolds all these treasures ; and he bids his soul be entirely at ease, and dismiss all doubt of his own perfect and consummate excellence. Fool ! in that very night, in the utter darkness of that very delusion, his soul is demanded of him ; he is made to see that his very life is not his own ; that not one of those good things " which he has provided " is his own ; for all are God's. At the close of this parable, this spiritual sense shines out

and becomes apparent: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God."

THE PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. — LUKE xviii. 9-14.

In this parable the instruction is again the same, but is now presented in a form which confines it to spiritual things. The parable is expressly spoken "unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." This parable is aimed against self-trust; for the eternal antagonism is between that trust in self, from which comes the worship of self, and all delusion; and that trust in the Lord, which looks to Him as the source of all truth and all good and all strength, and finds Him a never-failing help. To the narrative which is given of the prayer of these two persons are added the very words which close the parable of those who chose for themselves the chief rooms: "For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And all that was said in the endeavor to explain the former parable is equally applicable to this.

THE PARABLE OF THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

16 And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life ?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good ? *there is none good but one, that is, God* : but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which ? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honor thy father and *thy* mother : and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up : what lack I yet ?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come *and* follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful : for he had great possessions.

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved ?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. — MATT. xix. 16-26.

The parable of the rich young man coming to Christ to learn how he might have eternal life, is repeated in the three first gospels with but little variation.

He came to Christ, running, and kneeled to him. There is certainly no want of earnestness, none of worship, presented here. His question was, What shall I *do*, to inherit eternal life ? From this it may be inferred that he thought eternal life was to be won by *doing* ; by doing only ; and we shall see how this parable tells that doing, on the one hand, is indispensable, but on the other hand, not effectual unless it springs from and is governed and qualified by a right and

adequate principle. He addressed our Lord as "Good Master." He came to Him as to a man, for he could see him only as a good man; perhaps a man possessed of perfect goodness. And the first words of our Lord's answer give the key-note of the whole parable; they tell at once, the precise truth which such persons as are represented by this young man need to learn. "Why callest thou me good? None are good but one, — God." Then it is added, "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Or, if you believe that God alone is good, and that all goodness is His goodness given to those who will receive it, *then*, if you with that belief keep the commandments, you will enter into life. And to the question which commandments should be kept, our Lord recited those which relate to good conduct, or a good external life. And the young man answered, "All these things have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" The meaning of all this is obvious. Here is a man who had always been observant of God's law; who had carefully avoided sin; and who now was ready to do any thing more, in the same way, which should be demanded of him. In the same way; but now a new way is to be prescribed to him.

Then it is said, that "Jesus, beholding him, loved him." Here is proof, if we needed it, that Jesus loves obedience, and loves all the fruits of goodness in a good life. But although Jesus loved him, or rather because he loved him, there comes a further answer. Jesus loved his obedience and his goodness, because the love of God desires and is gratified by whatever constitutes the happiness of man. It was for this reason that he was ready to tell the young man how to be happier; how to make his happiness genuine, permanent and indestructible; it was for this reason that he told the young man the one thing he needed to impart this character to his goodness and to his happiness: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and

thou shalt have treasure in heaven." In these words the one thing was given to the young man which he had asked for; the one thing he lacked. And yet when "he heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus to his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."

But what were the great possessions to which the young man clung at the cost of eternal life, and which our Lord emphatically declared to be a hindrance to heaven? It has generally, perhaps always, been supposed that they were the earthly riches which the young man possessed; and the whole parable has been read in all ages, as a lesson against the dangerous influence of wealth. But even a slight examination of these texts might always have shown, that the possessions which the young man was required to sell, could not be common earthly riches. This is apparent from the effect which this answer produced upon the disciples. "When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?" Or, as in Mark, "the disciples were astonished at his words," Or, as in Luke, "And they that heard it, said, Who then can be saved?" The disciples may have supposed, as many have erroneously supposed in all ages, that poverty is itself a merit, and a title to or preparation for heaven. But if they held this opinion, why should they be astonished or amazed at this denunciation of riches? And whether they held this opinion or not, how can we account for the question which, in the three gospels it is said they asked, "Who then is saved?" For a denunciation of riches is an approbation of poverty; a declaration that riches closes the door of heaven is a declaration that poverty tends at least to open it; a statement that obstructs the rich, favors the poor; that is, it obstructs the entrance into heaven against a few and makes it easier for multitudes. When the question was asked, "Who then can be saved, if riches are a hindrance to salvation?" the immediate answer would have

been, "the poor, the vastly more numerous poor;" if earthly riches were understood as those thus declared to be a hindrance to salvation.

But this was not the answer which our Lord gave. It is said in Mark, "But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard it is for them who trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of heaven." And again at this answer, the disciples were "astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?" Nor does this answer of our Lord with the subsequent astonishment of the disciples present a less inexplicable difficulty; for, not to speak of those who may have wealth and not trust to it, our Lord's answer leaves outside of his declaration, and impliedly favored by it, the vastly greater multitudes of those who could not trust in riches, because they have no riches to lead them into this danger or constitute this obstruction.

The narrative discloses the love of this young man for his earthly riches. But it nowhere intimates that he trusted in them. He loved them; but his earnest prayer to Christ shows that his trust was not wholly in them; it was in his obedience to the law; an obedience which he desired to know how to make more perfect, that his trust might be the surer and the stronger. Does not this tell us what constituted the riches or possessions in which he trusted and which closed against him the entrance into heaven? It was this obedience; it was the riches that he had painfully amassed by his rigid compliance with the law, from his youth up; it was the wealth of external goodness; and it was his trust in this goodness, which was his great peril and his great enemy. The peril and the enemy from which the divine mercy of our Lord sought to save him.

We can now understand the astonishment of the disciples. It is precisely the same astonishment which some readers of this book may feel, and may express by saying, "If goodness, careful, constant and consummate goodness, and life-long obe-

dience to the commands of God cannot be trusted to bring salvation, — Who then can be saved?"

The only answer is, "Sell all thou hast, and give unto the poor, and come and follow me." We sell a thing when we exchange it for money; the money of the soul is truth; we obey this command and sell this wealth of confidence in our goodness, when we exchange all this self-glorification, self-trust and self-worship, for the truth set forth at the beginning of this parable, — "there is none good but One, — God." For this truth is the very life of all religion and the inmost truth of all religious truth.

To be saved means to be saved from sin; to become heavenly; to be prepared for an immortality in heaven, where every thought of every mind and every pulse of every heart testify that all good and all happiness are from God, and are His, and are given by Him to men to be accepted and appropriated and made their own, as His gifts. Good received and made the man's own without the acknowledgment that it is God's continual gift, and with the belief that it is the man's own self-originated good, ceases to be good and becomes evil. Therefore, the acknowledgment and constant perception of the infinite love thus ever giving itself, and of the infinite wisdom ever guiding and leading into happiness, — these are the vital essentials of heaven. No man may safely relax his efforts to learn and to obey the divine commands. He cannot labor for this too constantly or too strenuously. But if he believes that he does this by his own strength and excellence and wisdom, if he thus regards himself as the sufficient source of his own goodness and his own salvation, he becomes a God unto himself. And if he carried this habit of thought and feeling to heaven he would find himself isolated there and in antagonism with the whole life of heaven. Far, far would he be from having "treasure in heaven." And it is for this reason, that he is commanded to exchange this self-worship for the truth that God alone is to be loved and worshipped.

The young man was commanded to give this to the poor. We obey this command when and so far as by word and act we teach this truth to them who know it not and are therefore poor indeed. In so doing, we follow Him ; follow Him step by step through His earthly career. For His humanity was cleansed from its inherited infirmity and proclivity to evil, as, by repeated temptation and conflict, it became able to acknowledge the Divine within, as alone good. And because this work was done absolutely and perfectly, the Human became one with the Divine, and became itself Divine.

No man can follow Him to this result. But he may follow Him in this path ; and be welcomed by Him in heaven, for thither this path leads.

Woe unto us, if we so love and trust in the self-accumulated riches of self-ascribed goodness, that we cannot obey this command ; but turn away, either not seeing the truth, or seeing it only to be sorrowful because it requires a greater sacrifice than we are willing to make.

THE PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.

33 Hear another parable ; There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again he sent other servants more than the first : and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir ; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. — *MATT. xxi. 31-44.*

The parables we have last considered teach humility; and in this parable this lesson is enforced. For we have here, if we read this parable in its spiritual sense, the pride in self and trust in self, which always reject the mercies that would teach self-abasement before Him who alone is good, and who ever seeks to lead us to goodness; we have here a vivid picture of this pride carried to its final consummation, and of the "miserable destruction" which awaits it.

The parable of the rich young man teaches us that there is a goodness in which we cannot safely trust. What is the goodness in which we can trust? The whole Bible seeks to answer this question; it seeks to point out the paths of genuine goodness; and for this purpose the Word of God was uttered. Let us see how this instruction is given in the parable of the wicked husbandmen. This also is one of the few parables which is related in all the three first gospels.

God is represented as a householder; for the whole effort of His providence is to gather all in the universe into one household, which shall look to Him not only as Lord and Master, but as Father.

To this end he "planted a vineyard;" literally a place, in which grapes might grow and ripen and wine be made of them; spiritually, a state, in which that spiritual truth repre-

sented by wine, might be planted in the mind, and its fruits ripen there, and the water of natural truth might be converted into the wine of spiritual truth, as the dew and the rain are in the grape, and as was done — the same thing but by miraculous means — at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. He hedged it round about with the defining truths which tell men plainly when they are doing His will and when they are not. He digged a wine-press in it and built a tower. The vineyard itself is planted by the literal, external word ; for evil must be renounced and good cultivated in the external life, in obedience to the literal laws of God, or the foundation of all goodness is wanting, and the indispensable condition of higher goodness is absent. But in this literal sense lies concealed the spiritual sense as a wine-press digged therein ; and when the ripened grapes of literal obedience are brought to this sense, their prepared juices are extracted ; out of mere obedience higher motives and principles come forth, and the wine is ready to make glad the heart of man.

The vineyard thus planted and prepared is let out to husbandmen, and He who planted it goes into a far country. It is not given to the husbandmen ; it is put into their possession, on condition that they hold it as His and render to Him the fruits of it ; and then He goes, or seems to go, afar ; so far, that we are unconscious of His presence, and of His influence, and are in freedom, to think and feel and act and live, from our own selfhood. And what has already been said of the necessity and purpose of human freedom and of the means by which it is preserved, will show that the planting of the vineyard was no more an act of divine mercy than the leaving those for whom it is planted to use it in their own way and in their own freedom.

It should now be remarked that the spiritual sense of this parable, as of others, may be considered in what we would call a general way, and also in a specific way ; or, in its relation to a nation or a church, and also in its relation to individual men.

In the first, or general way, this parable applied to the Jewish nation or church ; and this meaning was too obvious not to be seen by those to whom it was spoken. The chief priests and Pharisees, it is said, “perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.”

In this general application of the spiritual sense, the vineyard was the Israelitish church, hedged round about and provided with its wine-press and its tower. Its founder left the Jews to their own freedom ; and in their abuse of it they slew or rejected and disregarded His servants the prophets, and at last crucified His son.

In the specific sense, all this is true, even to its minutest details, of very many individuals in that church, and of very many in the Christian Church ; and will always be true, while evil exists and is strong upon the earth.

The general cause of this is the unity of the divine reason, order, and providence. For from this comes the general law, that wholes are made of parts, each of which is like unto the whole. Thus, God, who is in all being, is Himself a Divine Man ; while the last and lowest of rational and immortal creatures is also a man ; and between these extremes, all orderly and organized collections or associations of men, as every church while it remains unperverted, and every society of angels, and every society formed of societies, and every heaven, and the whole heaven, is, in the sight of God, as a man. And where the law does not seem to apply, as in the limbs and members of the human body, a human principle prevails in the life which forms and fills them, and seeks to make them orderly and healthy members of a man.

The Jewish nation, because composed of Jews, had, as its national character, a Jewish character. All the elements which together composed this character, were elements which lived and acted in the individuals which composed the nation ; in some more and in some less. The national character was the common resultant, or the general effect and expres-

sion of all the characters of all the Jews. Hence, whatever is true of the nation was the effect of, and may be regarded as caused by, that character which belonged to the whole nation because it prevailed in the individual members.

Now the essential and distinctive character of the Jewish nation was naturalness; or, if we may make such a word, externalness. Whatever might be true of some of its members, — as a nation, or people, all its thoughts, beliefs, motives and affections, were, to the last degree external, or sensuous, or merely natural, or, to use another phrase which all these mean, they were devoid of spiritual life.

In all human beings a Jewish nature exists, because a Jewish nature is only human nature when not elevated above mere naturalness. And therefore this parable has its specific application to every human being.

For all of us this vineyard is planted; and even for those to whom religious truth has been given by other means than the Bible.

For all men this vineyard has been prepared by Him who would gather all into His household. For all it has been hedged round, because all religious truth has defined religious duty, and prohibited sin. For all it has had its wine-press and its tower, for all religious truth, however ultimated, comes down without break or interruption from its source, and all tends to lead the minds and souls of men upwards to its source. To the freedom and responsibility of all men is religious truth given. And the universal end of all truth is that we render to the giver the fruits thereof.

The fruits of truth are good thoughts, good affections, good acts, and good lives. We render them to Him who gives them, when we acknowledge that they are His gifts; when we acknowledge with heart and soul and all our understanding, that He alone is of Himself good; that all goodness is from Him, and His perpetual gift to all who are willing to receive it.

It is the universal end of His providence, that we should thus render to Him the fruits of His vineyard, because truth requires this, because justice requires this, because our happiness requires it. By that acknowledgment the heavens are made one; one home, one house, of which He is the householder. By the perception and acknowledgment of this truth the eyes of men and angels are opened to all truth, because this truth is the most essential and central of all truths. By this acknowledgment the hearts of men and angels are opened to all good, because it is essential and central justice; and from it flow forth all good affections and by it all are vitalized; and men and angels are gradually brought into the ability to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and thus to obey that commandment which is itself the gift of infinite love, given as the foundation and the means of infinite happiness.

To deny that all truth and all good come to us from their only source, is to assert and incorporate with our lives, that essential and central falsity from which all falsehood springs. It is to do and to love that injustice which cannot but gradually eradicate all sense of justice and destroy all possibility of living in the family of God. It is to destroy the possibility of ever cultivating in the heart affections which are genuinely good, and of ever possessing or knowing a happiness which can be real and permanent.

Therefore the whole providence of God (because this means only the perpetual action of a perfect love guided by a perfect wisdom) aims to give to men and to every man, this great truth which may lead to all good and all happiness; and to prevent their taking to themselves this great evil and unhappiness, this fountain of all falsity, all evil, and all wretchedness.

For this end he sends to men many servants, and all His servants work to this end, each in his own way. And all

truths are his servants. They most and chief which are the truths of His Word ; for all these testify, with one voice, but with a voice so modulated and so varied in its utterance that it may reach every heart, in every state.

Next, are all religious truths his servants, for all, of every name and kind, add their testimony that God is our Father, and the only source and giver of all goodness ; and when truths still calling themselves religious truths fail in this testimony, it is the sign and proof that they are falsified, and bring only a message and invitation from the realms of falsity and woe.

And then all truths are his servants, because all truth joins in this one testimony. All scientific truths, all which are suggested to an opened mind by all the works of God, all which the simplest child may catch as he looks on the rose, the cloud, and all the beauty of earth, and tastes its blessings, all that the highest intellect can learn as it hears the story of the stars and begins to comprehend the laws and forces of the universe, and catches glimpse after glimpse at the mysteries involved in every thing that lives and every thing that is,—all of these scattered rays point upwards, all converge, all lead to one centre, God ; and from this centre all their light has come, bringing with it love and good.

These are all the servants of God ; but all work together, not only for one end, but in obedience to one law, without which that end cannot be attained. The end is that man may freely and of himself, choose and cultivate the truth and the good thus offered to his acceptance ; and, that this freedom should be eternally protected and preserved.

And therefore there never was, and there never can be, until perfect love shall fail and perfect wisdom err, a revelation, a doctrine or a truth, religious or scientific, which could *compel* the unwilling to believe in God. All truths as far as they can, persuade, all as far as they can, induce, men to compel themselves ; to resist with all their might the pride

and perversity and self-confidence which deny God. This work of self-compulsion is the highest effort of human freedom ; but none of the servants of God do this work of compulsion for man.

Therefore there have always been, are now, and it may be feared always will be, men who love themselves too well to believe in God ; who trust in themselves too entirely to ask for or accept His guidance ; who gather the fruits of His vineyard, and call them all their own, their own work, their own wisdom, their own goodness.

And when the servants of God come to them to bring the message of truth and justice and love, they take them, but it is only to beat one and kill another and stone another ; and when other servants come again and yet again, more than the first, — for the mercy of God cannot weary, — unto them they do likewise.

It is not probable that these pages will fall under the eye of those who deny the existence or goodness or providence of God. And it is perhaps impossible that any such reader, if he opens this book, can read it so far as to know what I am now saying. They who go with me will be persons who believe in God, and who worship him ; and to them it may seem as if nothing of all this was applicable to them. But it is a solemn, perhaps a fearful, truth, that there is no one to whom it is not, in some form and in some degree, applicable. For even where this acknowledgment of God as the giver of all good may be earnest and sincere and not only general but prevailing in the mind, it is certain that in every particular in which this acknowledgment fails, we are among those who wound his servants if we do not slay them, and turn away from them if we do not deliberately cast them out of the vineyard ; and we are among those who do not render to him the fruits of His vineyard. Who is there who is never proud of some good thing which he has done, never vain of it, never desirous that it should

be known as his, never, in his secret thought, secret perhaps even to himself, desirous that it should be so known that he may have all the credit of it? Who is there, who knows or fears that his or her goodness has been denied, and some imputation cast upon it, or that his influence or authority are resisted and weakened, and his position among men lowered, and his merits clouded, or, in simpler words, that he is not thought so well of as he deserves, — who can know this without something more than a sorrow that falsities should diminish his usefulness; without something of the anger and the grief which resent personal wrong. And is it not certain that so far as there is this anger and this grief, there is a disposition to gather the fruits of His vineyard and mark them with our own name? There are servants of his, ready enough to tell us to beware, to call on us to render to him the fruits of his vineyard, with the calm certainty that they will be safe in his hands; but do we then listen to his servants?

I have called this a solemn thought, and perhaps it is a fearful one. And it would be a most fearful one, were it not for the comfort which others of his servants stand ready to offer.

They tell us, that we see in this only our own inherited nature; only our human nature; only that nature, which, from the first moment of our existence, He has been endeavoring to lift up, to cleanse, to regenerate. They tell us, that we have been permitted to feel thus, that we may become conscious of our true nature, and of its proclivity to self and evil, and of the necessity of watchfulness over it, and of resistance to it.

And then they tell us, that if we mourn this weakness and error, the good work has begun; that this work will be advanced by every resistance to this or any other tendency to evil. And while we may not hope, for none may hope, in this life to put evil so far away that it shall not continually

come up and call on us to meet and resist it, we may hope that we can give, in our own minds, by using His help, the prevalence to good ; to give to Him who planted the vineyard, some at least, of the best fruits thereof.

Let us not say that we have done enough to make good the stronger on the whole, and have thus crossed the line between good and evil, and will be contented there, leaving the rest of the work to be done hereafter ; for this very contentment would place us at once on the side of evil and turn our steps downward. But let us remember the requirement, of constant, unremitting resistance against our own evils ; and when we remember this requirement, we may remember that after we have done with time, an eternity will open in which the combat may be ended, and we may share in the gladness with which all in heaven ascribe the victory to Him, and rest in peace upon His everlasting arm.

Constant, unremitting resistance ! This is the requirement ; this the burden which rests upon us. But this requirement is imposed by, this burden is permitted by, a love which also gives to us constant, unremitting assistance. And while this assistance is rendered by almighty power, this power is but the instrument of a love and wisdom which do not permit it to be more than assistance, and do not permit it to avail without our co-operation. But then this love and wisdom, both perfect, are always employed in rendering this assistance effectual with our co-operation.

To this end servant after servant is sent, instrument after instrument is employed. And last of all, he sends unto men his Son. He sends his Son by assuming that humanity which is His child ; by becoming God with us. "They will reverence my son." From the coming of the Son through all ages, and to every mind to which the coming of Jesus Christ is presented, the final, the decisive test is applied. "They will reverence my Son." Do they reverence the Son ?

There are those who do, and there are those who do not.

They who do, go upwards, and they who do not, go downwards. Nothing more can be done. The last and most effectual means, means which must be effectual if any can be, are employed. But even this means, even this coming of God among men, walking with them as the impersonation of divine love and doing the works of this love, and speaking — as man never spake — the words of divine wisdom, even this almighty instrument of salvation is so veiled and tempered, that human freedom — without which there can be no salvation — is still preserved.

They whose love of self cannot be overcome; they in whom the love of self has caused a contentment with self and a pride in self and a trust in self, which clothe the understanding as with impenetrable and indurated darkness, they may find in this infinite means of salvation, the means of perdition. They may say — they do say — “This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” They may say, and some do say, here is perfect goodness, here is one who walks among men in sinless purity, with a love ready to forgive, ready to bless, asking only that it may bless; patient of pain, and as patient of injury; enduring all things, sacrificing all things, and at last welcoming death and sacrificing self. And he too is a man, only a man, as much a man as we are; and we are as much a god as he is. What need of any other god than man? how can there be more a god than this man? What higher or better nature can there be than his nature? *and it is our nature.* All that he was by birth and inheritance we are, and all that he became we may become, and more and better now as human nature has ripened with the flow of time. Thus they kill Him, and seize on His inheritance. Thus the infinite self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ only intensifies their self-worship, and makes it ineradicable.

The incarnation of Jehovah in Jesus Christ is the mystery of mysteries. Our Lord asserts that He is one with the

Father. The record of His birth declares decisively to all who believe the Gospels, that He is not as other men. But the instruction on this subject in all the Gospels, taken as a whole, is tempered with infinite mercy. There stands the Truth; shining in its own glory for them who open their eyes that they may see it. And to them who can see this truth only dimly, if they begin with any perception of it, its light will grow into the fulness of day, here or hereafter.

There seems to be a process of separation going on among those who agree in asserting that Jesus Christ is not God. A line is being drawn; and I suppose it is drawn between those who hold that in Christianity and in Jesus Christ there is an element of the supernatural, and those who deny this. Whether this be so, I may have little right to express an opinion. But it seems to me, that all who hold, reverently and honestly, the existence and reality of this supernatural element, stand on one side of this line. They must hold that He was more than they are or can become; more than any one who has only our common nature and is only a man as we are, ever was or can be. And they who hold this are on the same side of the dividing line on which they stand who receive the doctrines of the New Church. They have begun to see this infinite Truth, which, because it is infinite, none can see with perfect clearness in its whole extent. But they have begun to see it; their faces are turned towards it; and if they hold the truth they see, humbly, devoutly and firmly, their sight will grow clearer. Among those who stand on this side of the line, there will be degrees and varieties in their perception; there will be differences of opinion; but these differences need not be antagonisms.

But of those who stand on the other side of that line; of them who stand there, not from imperfect knowledge, or the effect of education, or the seductions of other minds, — but *because* in their own love of self and their pride in self, so far as they acknowledge the goodness of the Lord they use

it only as evidence of their own, and that they may so use it, deny that there was any thing in His nature higher than their own,—of them what can I say? Whatever may be my hope that they will learn their error before it is too late,—what can I say, but that they seem to me to hold now a fatal falsity; a falsity that springs from the sources of all error and all evil, the love of self and pride in self; a falsity that must be to every one who thus rejects the Gospels and clings to this falsity, the parent of all falsity.

They do not see that the life of Jesus Christ on earth was one of conflict. They do not see that His suffering, His woe, His agony and bloody sweat, sprang from the infinite and unimaginable conflict between all the forces and qualities and elements of the maternal humanity, whence He derived a human nature like their own,—and the divine life within. They do not see that He was strong only with the strength of God, while the end of all His suffering was, that He might ascend to his Father, that He might bring His humanity into perfect unity with God, that He might bear upwards towards perfect goodness, all who can see in Him God with us, and reverence and worship and love Him so.

They do not see that what they have by birth and nature is only that nature which, by its opposition to good, caused the agonies of Jesus Christ; and that the power which overcame this opposition was the divine within him, which would gladly do a similar work for us, by helping us in our resistance to evil and our sacrifice of self and our recognition of a life higher than our own. And they by their self-worship, deny, reject, resist, and make impossible, this divine assistance.

They have killed him, that the inheritance may be theirs. And only by His life in them could they enter upon this inheritance; and they have sought it by means which make it impossible that it should be theirs.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

THE actions of our Lord were as significant, as full of infinite meaning, as his words. All of them might be regarded as parables of action, and some of them are so obviously symbolic, that their significance has never been denied, whatever difference of opinion may have existed as to the meaning which should be drawn from them or the obligation they imposed.

Of these, by far the most important, — if we may so speak where all are of infinite moment, — are those upon which two Sacraments are founded.

A Sacrament may be defined as a holy rite or ceremony. Why they are holy, and in what their holiness consists, may be better seen after some consideration of the two rites which bear this name in the New Church. One of these is Baptism. The other is the Lord's Supper.

The acts and words of John are recorded in all the four gospels, with some diversity, but no contradiction. They all teach us, that John the Baptist was the "forerunner" of our Lord. His ministration preceded and prepared for that of our Lord. This consisted in "preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" and in baptizing the multitudes who came to Him for that purpose. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so

now ; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water. And, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After that, Jesus said many things about baptism. Among them are "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." And His final command to His disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

These and other texts afford a full explanation of, and a sufficient reason for, the nearly universal adoption by Christians, in all ages and nations, of baptism as an introductory rite, which places the person baptized within the Christian Church. But, taken by themselves, they give but little explanation of the meaning of the rite, or of its effect.

So too they account for the nearly universal acknowledgment of its holiness. And some of them indicate with entire distinctness, that it has a meaning and an efficacy which do not appear externally. As where John says, "I indeed baptize you with water, — he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And this declaration is repeated, with some variation of form, in all four of the Gospels. So our Lord said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it is accomplished." And, to his disciples, "Can ye be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" So also, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." And "Except a man be born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Such passages have caused most persons who thought of them, to regard Baptism as a rite of very great and very holy significance. But these texts have not told what this significance was. Some efforts have been made to explain this;

and some controversies have arisen about these explanations. But, in general, the subject has rested in the minds of thoughtful and reverent Christians, as a mystery, of which no definite solution could be given.

Nor could this solution be given excepting by the science of correspondence; and for the purpose of applying this science to this question, we must first inquire what Baptism is in the merely natural or external sense of the word. "Baptize" is but the English form of the Greek verb "Baptiso." What then did the Greek word mean? or, what was the literal meaning of the word when it was written or spoken by our Lord and His disciples?

The primary meaning of the Greek word was, to wash by immersing in water; or, simply, to wash. Our word Baptism is a technical religious word, used only as such a word. But when our Lord and His disciples used it, they used a word of common and known meaning; and we shall have what they said, very much as they said it, if we substitute the word "wash" for the word "baptize." Then we should read, "I indeed come to wash you with water, — he shall wash you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." "He that believeth and is washed shall be saved," and so in other passages.

When these texts are thus read, they come at once into connection with many others in scripture. As, for example, in the Psalms, "I will wash my hands in innocency." "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity." "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." And in Isaiah, "Wash ye, make you clean, put away evil." And in Jeremiah, "O Jerusalem, wash thy heart from wickedness." No one has ever doubted that in such passages as these, to wash means to wash spiritually, or to cleanse away wickedness.

But is this a mere figure of speech? Is it only an instance of what is called the *poetry* of the Bible? It is a figure, and it is poetry; but it is so by virtue of the science and law of correspondence. It is so because the material universe cor-

responds in the whole and in all its parts to the spiritual universe. It is so because WATER corresponds to TRUTH. This correspondence is not fanciful, coming up in an imaginative way, when one wishes to make a poetical or rhetorical use of it. It is one of the most universal and fundamental laws of creation and the universe. Water, in the world of matter, everywhere, always, under all circumstances, in all its laws and all its functions, corresponds to Truth in the world of mind. Therefore it has this correspondence always wherever water or the use of water is mentioned in the Scripture. I use now the word Truth because I have no English word to represent better *all that exists in the human understanding*. It means all that really is Truth, and also all that seems to be Truth; and therefore sometimes signifies the opposite of Truth. Just as water, one of the most necessary and useful things upon earth, may be and sometimes is foul, mischievous and destructive.

It may be well to glance at a few passages of Scripture which are made significant by this correspondence of water. In the text which stands on my titlepage, our Lord says, "He that believeth on me shall never thirst." Did any one ever suppose that our Lord means that he who believes in Him, shall never feel physical thirst? This is impossible. It *must* mean something else. And it *must* mean that the thirst which is a thirst for religious truth will be satisfied by a full and firm faith in Him. Water *must* mean here, spiritual water, truth. And the New Church only says that what it must mean in these and a few other passages, it does actually mean in all other passages; and this, not by an accidental, or arbitrary, or rhetorical use of something which happens to admit of this symbolic use, but by an exact and rigorous law of a science, that is founded in the laws of creation and the nature of things. In the many commands that the priests and the sacrifices should be washed this meaning is perhaps plain enough. So the command in Leviticus.

chap. xvii. ver. 16, that one who had violated a certain law should wash both his clothes and himself. "Then shall he be clean. But if he wash them not nor bathe his flesh, then shall he bear his iniquity." So when Elijah ordered Naaman to wash in Jordan seven times; Jordan, the bounding river of Judea proper, means as has been said the elementary or introductory truths of religion. Naaman was required to wash seven times, that he might be thoroughly cleansed, because his disease, leprosy, corresponded to the deadliest of sins. But the passages in which washing is mentioned are innumerable, and of most of them the simple application of this correspondence discloses the significance.

Indeed this correspondence is one of those which forces itself upon the mind. Hence washing—or baptism—in some form, has entered into the religious observances of nearly all religions and all nations, and into common phraseology. One often says now, "I wash my hands of it;" and formerly this thing was often done as an emphatic expression of the same thought. As "when Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person. See ye to it." The people understood his meaning and accepted it, for they "answered and said, His blood be upon us and on our children."

Baptism therefore means the cleansing from sin by truth; the washing away of sins by obedience to the truths which forbid them.

And now it is of the utmost importance to remember, that John's preparation for the coming of our Lord consisted of two things. One was Baptism, the other was Repentance. And these two must go together, in absolute conjunction, or neither of them is any thing. Repentance without Reform is nothing. But Reform without repentance is as completely nothing.

Baptism without Repentance is the abstinence from sin

without an acknowledgment of its sinfulness. It is obedience to truth and law on some other ground than that truth is God's rebuke for sin and the guide he gives to lead us from sin. It is obedience on any and every ground, of pride, or worldliness, or interest, or prudence, or self-complacency, —excepting the only ground which can make it baptism unto salvation. And the Bible is full of passages inculcating and illustrating the law, that the reform of conduct, the washing away of evil, must come from a religious motive, to be effectual. It is difficult to choose from among them.

Thus, the blind man was commanded to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, "which is, by interpretation, SENT;" because the spiritually blind cannot recover their sight and know the true from the false, unless they cleanse their sins away by washing in the waters SENT from God; in the truths of that Law which He has given; nor unless they do this in the knowledge and acknowledgment that the washing is by His help; and that they too are sent by His divine help and influence to the truths which He has already sent down from heaven to wash away the sins of men.

All that our Lord says to the Jews of their washing "the outside of the cup and the platter while within they are full of extortion and excess" refers to this baptism without repentance. And therefore he discloses to them why they should clean the inside, and how the cleansing may be effectual. He teaches them repentance *and* baptism, when He says, "Blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside may be indeed clean." And when He says that no one can be saved who is not born of water and of the spirit, He teaches that only he is saved who repents of and reforms from outward sin, and is led to reform by that desire of inward purity, which is given by the Holy Spirit to all who are willing to receive it.

It is not against baptism, but against baptism and repentance, that the natural man utterly rebels. "Are not Abana

and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." The natural man, give him selfish motive enough, will make his outer life whiter than snow, while "inwardly he is full of extortion and excess." Not all the beautiful and abounding rivers of Damascus can wash that leprosy away, which only the waters of Jordan have power to heal.

Baptism is then the sign of regeneration. But it is not regeneration. It is the symbol, or the beginning, or the promise, of a great work; but it is not the work itself. In former ages, and to some extent even now, baptism is regarded as imparting and effecting regeneration. In the early centuries of Christianity, it was not uncommon for converted Christians to delay baptism until they were dying, believing that this rite cleansed all previous sin away, and as death would prevent any farther sin, their salvation was thus secured.* But even then there were wise men who thought more wisely of this Sacrament. When Athanasius the Great, Bishop of Alexandria in the fourth century, was asked what he thought of those death-bed rites, and of the condition of persons upon whom this seal of baptism was set in their last hour, he answered with one of those apologues so common in those days, — "Possibly St. Peter may ask, why do you send me these treasure bags, so carefully sealed, *with nothing in them?*"

Is then Baptism nothing more than a sign, or symbol? Yes, it is much more. They who are acquainted with the doctrines of the New Church and are taught the unity of the universe before its Maker, know that the spiritual and the material worlds are closely united. That the material world is the foundation upon which the spiritual world rests, while

* A remarkable instance of this belief is related in St. Augustine's confessions.

the spiritual world is the organ or instrument of life to this lower world. They know that any solemn act performed in this world is the ultimation of some spiritual act to which it gives completeness and efficacy; and that it reaches upwards into that higher world and is known and felt there. Hence the rite of baptism informs those who are above, that the baptized person is given to Christianity. It opens a new pathway from them to him, and establishes new relations between them. It brings about him new associates, or places those who were with him before in nearer and closer association, and gives them the opportunity of new influence. It apprises them that a first step towards regeneration has been taken, an introductory step; and it calls upon them to watch and work henceforward, that this step may be followed by the successive steps which lead towards heavenly happiness.

The saying, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," may be most true of one who has never heard the name of Jesus, and never received the waters of baptism. For to every human being such divine truth is given as may lead him to salvation. If he receives it and obeys it, and in its light and by its help resists the evils which beset him, he "believeth, and is baptized" and is saved.

The question may then occur, How could our Lord need repentance; how could he repent? The sinless and undefiled could not repent of sin committed. But this is not the whole of repentance. There is another part of it, — the inner and greater part, — possible for Him as for us; and infinitely more possible for Him, than for us. This is, to detect the first beginnings of proclivity to sin, the first revelations of an existing tendency to sin, to know this by its true character, to call it by its true name, to bring to bear against it the influence of the truth which rebukes it, and at once arrest its growth and suppress its life.

All possible proclivities to sin existed in our Lord's mater-

nal humanity; He waited to assume it until "the fulness of time," had filled this humanity with tendencies to sinfulness of every kind; He assumed it that He might overcome, by His almighty power, that strength of sin which rose up in his humanity with a power only less than almighty. All this proclivity to sin, as daily and hourly it came into consciousness and demanded indulgence, he resisted, instantly, perfectly, and triumphantly. Well is it for us, when our repentance begins where His was wrought; in the beginnings, the first suggestions of sin; He needed not that any such tendency to sin should grow into act, for He knew them all at their birth. He knew them all; and how small a part of them can we ever know! He was able to overcome them perfectly, and promptly; how imperfect is our best repentance, and how often is it delayed until the sin has grown into the fulness of its hideous stature!

Because in Him this work was entire and perfect, His external man was made divine and perfectly united with the divine within. And infinitely imperfect as ours must be, let us try to approach a fitting thankfulness, that, by His help, we may follow in the path He opens, so far as to bring to us regeneration.

The 137th Psalm is the mournful song of the captives in Babylon. "By the rivers of Babylon,—we wept." Babylon is evil, is hell. The Psalm closes thus: "O daughter of Babylon—happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." This, which seems in the literal sense a most cruel and savage expression of revenge, is, in its spiritual sense, the constant prayer of every religious man. Earnestly does he ask the divine influence to enable him and help him to lay hold of the first beginnings of evil in his mind, the early germs of sinful affection and sinful thought, the sons and daughters of Babylon while they are yet "little ones," and dash them against the stones, against the truths which expose and resist them, against the Rock of

our salvation ; against all the Divine Truth as it comes to us in the instructions which detect and the commands which prohibit them.

The nearer we can come to this, the better we shall be. The more we do of this, the more of righteousness we do ; and the less we do the more of righteousness we leave undone. And because our Lord could do all of this work with infinite perfection, when He received the baptism of John He said, "THUS it becometh us, to fulfil ALL Righteousness.

The Psalms of David in their most internal sense relate only to our Lord ; to His conflicts, temptations, and sufferings, His victories and thanksgiving. David was a forerunner, a type, of Jesus Christ. But David in taking Bathsheba and causing Uriah to be killed committed one of the foulest crimes ever recorded. Can this too be a type of any thing in our Lord's life ? If we read the 51st Psalm we learn how David repented of this sin ; how he expressed his repentance with an intensity of grief, a wail of woe and self-accusation that no words have ever surpassed. But Jesus was the Son of David, and inherited from him through Mary, all those tendencies to wrong-doing and sin which in David were ultimated in that crime. All those tendencies and proclivities to sin were known to Jesus ; all of them He saw and felt, but none of them did He indulge, and of the thought and the feeling He repented infinitely more than David ever repented of the act ; all of them He knew and all He resisted and overcame and utterly suppressed, with a conflict of which the suffering is expressed as well as words can do it, in that Psalm, and yet most imperfectly.

John came to prepare the way of the Lord. He preached baptism and Repentance. And only the baptism he preached, and the repentance he preached, working together, can prepare the way of the Lord ; can do what John said he came to do. They only are the "Forerunner" of the Lord and of His work, and when they are joined in their activity, they

will make the paths of His divine influence straight and smooth. They will fill the valleys of humiliation with the joy of acceptance, and bring down the hills and mountains of pride. The crooked, which was bent from the line of right by the distorting influence of wrong, will be made straight. And the ways which had become rough and very difficult will be made smooth, and we shall walk in them towards the gates of heaven. And thus will His way to us be prepared for His coming. And when He thus comes, He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor; for they who have thus been baptized unto repentance will be as wheat which He will gather into His garner in Heaven. And they who refuse to be cleansed by the waters of this baptism will be as the chaff; and in their hearts He will permit the loves of sin and self to burn, for they will have no other life, and if this were quenched they would perish. And then will all flesh, all that is natural in man, all that man in his freedom will permit the divine influence to reach, all, all, will be purified and elevated and made spiritual, and so made living flesh, living with spiritual life; and it will see the salvation of God.

It is said, "*Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.*" For the power and effort to repent are themselves divine gifts. They are indeed *sent* to all, and received by all who are willing to receive them. But they are none the less divine gifts, and none the more the mere, independent, working of human nature.

So too it is said of the mother of John, "Elizabeth was barren." For repentance is born of the consciousness of utter barrenness. It is itself the first living thing in the mind; and until it is born, whatever else is there, be its name or its appearance what it may, it has no power of imparting life. So too John preached repentance "in the wilderness of Judea." And until we repent the heart is a wilderness; it is just here that we need to have repentance

preached to us; and when we repent we know it to be a wilderness where wild beasts roam at will and nothing grows which can sustain spiritual life.

We may learn also that sorrow is not the whole of repentance, and that a true repentance is an earnest and effectual desire to bring forth the fruits of righteousness, from the circumstance, that when the people crowded about John and asked of him "What shall we do?" he answered all, describing to each one in exact but simple terms, his duty. Nor does repentance bring us out from the wilderness, or turn our faces in the direction in which escape is possible, until it prescribes to us our duty, and induces us to discharge it. Then, and then only, "the axe is laid to the root of the tree."

"And they mused in their hearts concerning John, whether he were the Christ or not." So all who repent are liable to believe that repentance alone is enough and all, and that the Christ has come. But a genuine repentance soon tells the humbled sinner that salvation is yet a great way off, and that a mightier must come and do a mightier work.

Herod, the head of the Jewish nation, represents the whole natural proclivity of man to evil. And yet Herod at first, "feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy . . . and he heard him gladly." But John reproved Herod for his sins, and then he imprisoned John; and afterwards, at the urgent demand of Herodias, put him to death. The knowledge that John the Baptist was the type and representative of the repentance he preached, and that the history of John is the history of repentance, makes of all this a history of events which now occur too often, and always will, and which may occur with every man.

For seldom is any one, who lives within the name or presence of religion, so utterly reprobate, as not, at some times, to welcome an emotion of repentance, although the unaccustomed guest may bring some sense of fear. Still the man is glad to find that he is not wholly lost. He looks

upon this emotion as evidence of latent goodness coming at length into activity. He hears it gladly, because he believes that *hearing is enough*. But soon this feeling of repentance upbraids him for his sins; and this he will not hear, and he shuts it out from consciousness and remembrance, and suppresses and fetters it; and thus he imprisons John.

And surely it must be obvious that nothing can more endanger a man's spiritual condition, than thus to fetter and shut up in prison, to confine afar off where it can neither be seen nor heard, the emotion of repentance. And therefore we may understand why it is said, that Herod, when John rebuked him "for all the evils which he had done, *added this above all*, that he shut up John in prison."

But the conflict goes on, and must go on; until, although something of remorse and pain make itself felt, and John is remembered although bound and afar, evil conquers. Then Herod puts John to death at the instance of Herodias, or for the sake of his deadliest and best-beloved sin. And he does this in the festival hour of the sin which John rebuked; in the hour when it is strongest and most exultant.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE SUPPER.

THE Passover is one of the connecting links between the Old Testament and the New. It has always been regarded as typical and emblematic, or as having a spiritual reference and meaning. St. Paul calls Christ "Our Passover, sacrificed for us." It was the most solemn festival of the Israelites. It holds a distinct relation to the most solemn sacrament of the Christian Church.

Learned men differ as to the meaning of the word, Passover, or rather as to its reference. Some have held that it referred to the passing of the Israelites over the Red Sea; and the Latin Vulgate and the Septuagint are thought to favor this view. Our received English translation refers it to the passing of the destroying angel over the houses marked with the blood of the lamb. The question is perfectly unimportant, when we come to the spiritual sense. The Passover might have either of these meanings, and if it had either it had both; for they are, substantially, the same.

The celebration of the Passover was ordained as an acknowledgment and memorial of Regeneration.

When the Israelites were ready to set forth on their pilgrimage from Egypt to Zion, the destroying angel was ready to smite the first-born of Egypt.

When men are ready to begin their pilgrimage from the state represented by Egypt, from a state of pure naturalism, of exclusive love for the things of this world or for the

pleasures of sense or of merely sensuous and natural thought, from an unbelief of another life or of responsibility to God or dependence upon Him and an absence of care or thought about the things which belong to religion, — then the destroying angel is ready to smite the first-born of the Egypt, the Egyptian darkness, of their minds, “from the first-born of Pharoah that sat upon his throne to the first-born of the captive in the dungeon and all the first-born of the cattle.” For these influences from above endeavor to strike down *all* the powers of evil which bid the natural man think and care for the earth only, and hold him in utter bondage.

Pharoah, the king of Egypt and impersonation of naturalism in affection and in thought, lets God’s people go. Naturalism loses its oppressive and suffocating hold upon whatever affections and thoughts feel their bondage and desire to escape from it, and lets them go forth to encounter temptation and distress and momentary despair, and through all make their way to a Holy Land, to the peace of holiness.

When on their way and at its early stage, the truth that is leading them forth comes to the sea of falsehood which bars their progress, the divine influence makes “the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over.” Thoughts and perceptions of truth repel the advancing waves. These waters of falsehood are blown aside by the “wind from the East” — from the rising Sun, — but they return again upon the chariots and horsemen of Egypt; these are overwhelmed and infest no longer the advancing mind, in the same way as before; for it has passed out of Egypt, although it is yet far from the Holy Land.

The Jewish Passover and the Christian Passover are as the beginning and the end. They contain between them, in their spiritual meaning, all that belongs to the work of Regeneration. For while the Passover of the Israelites was instituted to commemorate the beginning, the Sacrament of

the Supper was instituted to commemorate the consummation of all that is possible of Human Regeneration.

Let us look at the symbolic meaning of some of the details of the Passover. A lamb, without blemish, was to be taken, for it was the symbol of that innocence, in the desire for which the first seeds of regeneration are planted. "A lamb for a house,—according to the house of his fathers," or, if need be, of him and his nearest neighbors; for the innocence must be such—can be only such—as the inherited nature of the man and the social relations of his life make possible. The blood was stricken with hyssop upon the posts and lintels of the door of the house. The blood—the vital principle of this innocence—marks the posts and lintels of the door of the mind to prevent the entrance of whatever would defeat the work of reformation. And this is done with the bitter and cleansing sense of sin and the need of repentance,—“Cleanse me with hyssop and I shall be clean.”

The flesh of the lamb was to be eaten. What we eat we assimilate or appropriate and make a part of ourselves. This symbolism is often made use of in the Bible. The command was given not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. We eat of this fruit when we believe that we are wise and good or have all the fruit of knowledge from ourselves and by our own unaided strength. We believe this because the serpent—the principle of sensuous thought or of thought from mere sense, and of sensuous affection—tells us that it is so. Then we think there need be no God,—there is no God. And this is “the fall of man;” the beginning of all falsity and all sin.

But when we eat the flesh of the lamb of the Passover, at the command of God, we make that innocence our own, but as His gift. And it may be well to notice briefly the manner of the eating. The flesh was to be eaten, “not raw, nor sodden with water, but roast with fire.” Water always

refers to what is intellectual, fire to what is affectional; and the innocence we should make our own as His gift, should be not the mere natural innocence of the kind feelings or quiet temper born with us,—not raw—and not dependant upon truth only or mere belief,—or sodden with water—but prepared by the fire of a hearty love for it to be nourishment for our souls. It must be eaten with unleavened bread; for the leaven which prepares for food our ordinary bread symbolizes that mixture of impurity without which our spiritual food would not be adapted to us, but which forms no part of that divine innocence we desire to accept and appropriate as the gift of our Father. It must be eaten with bitter herbs, which here again symbolize the cleansing bitterness of repentance. “And thus shall ye eat it. Your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, your staff in your hand, and in haste.” We must eat it as men girded for the pilgrimage, earnest and in haste to flee from Egypt, with a full readiness to begin and a determination to pursue the way to Zion,* and it will then give us strength to encounter the perils and the toils which lie before us.

They who have no honest, earnest and reverent belief that the Bible is the Word of God cannot but regard these interpretations as mere absurdities, or at best, as amusing ingenuities. To them who have that belief, but to whom it seems a strange thing that the Bible admits such an interpretation, I would suggest the question, Would it not be far more strange, that the Word of God should contain such details as these, if they were wholly incapable of imparting spiritual and religious instruction? But how is it possible for them to impart any such instruction, if they are not in

* Among the strange apothegms which have come down from Pythagoras, is one which says, “Let not him that starteth upon a journey, return back, for the Furies will go with him to his home.” Does this mean the same with the words of our Lord, “No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven”?

some way symbolic? Then, if symbolic at all, is it irrational to suppose their symbolism systematic, and capable of definite interpretation, by the application of definite principles and rules, founded upon the relations which exist among the works of God, and between His works and His Word?

Let us now endeavor to discern the spiritual meaning conveyed in the command to eat the flesh of the Lamb of God; of the Lamb of the Christian Passover.

Our Lord's work on earth began with His earthly life. But it was not until He was "about thirty years old," that He entered upon His public ministration. At its beginning He was baptized of John. At its close He instituted the Holy Supper. Baptism is the sign and symbol of a beginning of which the Supper is the consummation.

The sanctity of the Supper has always been acknowledged. The words and circumstances attending its institution account for this. The positive command, "Do this in remembrance of me," can never be forgotten, however it be interpreted, by any who call themselves Christians.

As Baptism has been, in most ages of the Church, interpreted literally, so has the Supper. Nor could it have been otherwise.

In the Catholic Church the doctrine of the Supper settled down into an assertion of the actual change of the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. And this doctrine is expressed by the word "Transubstantiation."

When the Reformation began, it was deemed necessary to encounter this doctrine and dispose of it in some way. This necessity involved the leaders of Protestantism in much difficulty, and resulted in a wide difference of opinion. Calvin, and those who agreed with him, held the Supper to be a sign or symbol, of great sanctity and profound significance, but only a sign or symbol. While Luther and those who

were of his school could neither adopt the views of the papal church which they had left, nor yet give up their belief in the literal truth of our Lord's words. And they stood finally on this ground; the natural substance of the bread and wine did not pass away and was not changed, but the spiritual substance of our Lord's flesh and blood was superinduced upon the spiritual substance, and the natural and spiritual substances co-existed. This they expressed by renouncing the papal word "Transubstantiation" and substituting for it the word "Consubstantiation."

Under these phrases, or whatever others were used, there has probably existed in all branches of the Christian Church in all ages, every degree of belief in and reverence for the Sacrament of the Supper, from the largest and highest to the least and lowest. But they who have been most profoundly impressed with a conviction of its sanctity, its value and its significance, could never have more than a dim and undefined idea of this significance. Let us endeavor to state the revelation of this significance now made.

Here, as elsewhere we must ask of the science of correspondence, which is a part of this revelation, to explain to us its instruction. What then will this science tell us, of the correspondence of Flesh, — of Blood, — of Bread, — of Wine, of Eating and of Drinking? And then what interpretation will this science give us of the words and circumstances attending the institution of the Supper.

The soul is an organized form of spiritual substance, as the body is an organized form of material substance. The soul exists within its spiritual body, by means of which it forms and fills and animates the material body. Were it not so, we should not after the death of the material body, continue to live as ourselves, as persons, as human beings. And were it not so, we should not live in this world. For matter, of itself, has not life, and no form or organization of it can give it independent life, or do more than make it the

receptacle and instrument of life, and so living. And when death comes, it comes because the material organism is so disordered by disease or decay, that it can no longer receive life from the spiritual body, and therefore can no longer live. And then the soul with its spiritual body leaves it and rises into a spiritual world, formed as the spiritual body is, of spiritual substance.

The soul forms and fills its spiritual body and through the spiritual body forms and fills the material body, by means of correspondence. For correspondence is not merely a fact, or a system of facts, but it is a force by means of which higher things create, form and fill the lower things, which then correspond to and represent the higher things.

Flesh is the general term for the vital solids of the frame. Blood is the general term for the vital fluids of the frame.

In the soul are two things, or two kinds or classes of things, to one or other of which, every thing in the soul belongs. One of them is the will, the other is the understanding. Or one is Love and the other is Wisdom. Or one is that which includes all the things of affection under all their names, and the other includes all the things of thought under all of their names.

It has heretofore been said that the most universal distinction of the matter of the universe is into solids and fluids. Of these, the solids correspond to the affectional part of the spiritual universe, and the fluids to the intellectual. So the flesh of the body (or the body, this word being used to designate its solids) corresponds to the will and all the things of the will. And the blood corresponds to the understanding, and to all the things of the understanding.

In the simplest form in which this can be stated, Flesh corresponds to Good, and Blood to Truth.

What is Good?

A moment's reflection will tell us that we use the word "good" in three different senses. In one sense, we mean

by it that which is morally good, and stands in opposition to that which is morally bad. Probably every one has something in his mind, which tells him that there is a difference between good and evil ; between right and wrong.

But we also use the word "good" in the sense of satisfactory or agreeable and pleasant, and in this sense it is applied to whatever gratifies any desire, as when one says of an article of food, that it is *good*, and so by a common phrase, one who desires gain will say that he has made a "good" bargain, meaning the gainful one he desires.

And there is yet a third sense, not so sharply defined, but distinguishable from the other two. In this sense "good" as an adjective means fit for, adapted to, or adequate to. As in Gen. iii. 6, "The woman saw that the tree was good for food." So good for any particular purpose means adapted to that purpose, and good for nothing means wholly useless ; and good for so much means equal to or capable of so much.

These three senses all diverge from one source ; they are all founded on one truth. That truth is, that all good is in God, and from God, and is therefore divine in its origin, and its original character. And we may easily see how good, in its origin and in its essence, perfectly combines these three senses.

In the first place, it is perfectly good in the moral sense. For it is simply impossible for us to imagine any obscurity or qualification or taint of wrong resting upon the divine goodness.

In the next place, the second sense is equally implied, for it is the infinite divine goodness which causes the infinite divine happiness. Goodness in Him perfectly agrees with, and is pleased with ; every thing that could be agreeable to perfectly pure moral affections ; and to nothing else.

And in the third place, it is the source, as it is the guide, of the infinite divine power. It is its source, because only from the divine goodness comes the desire or impelling influence which moves Him to act, as He does act, always and infinitely.

And it seeks for ever to do what this divine goodness desires, and to do as this divine goodness desires; to do, or to cause all those things which are adapted to carry into effect what this goodness desires.

But while these three senses or aspects of good are one in God, in us they are divided, because they are perverted.

We sometimes call that good morally which is approved by our perverted moral taste; but this is not that good which could make us happy.

Again, we call that good which gives pleasure to this perverted moral taste.

And lastly, we deem that to be good for us, which we can use as an instrument for the purposes which our infirm and perverted moral character desires.

But good, essential good, is always, that which (however limited) is not changed from, nor in any way made to contradict the divine goodness.

Our salvation depends, and our eternal happiness depends, upon our correcting the perversion of our character and our affections; or upon our receiving into ourselves and making our own by voluntary adoption and assimilation, the divine good. Not infinitely, as it is in Him, but finitely, as we can; but still without its perversion into the opposite of that good.

To this end our Lord entered into the world. For this purpose He became a man, and one of us. He perfectly cleansed his humanity from all taint of evil. He did this in such a way, that by doing it he was able to open a way in which we may tread. He resisted, overcame and brought into subjection and order all the evil spirits which could assail him through the evils of his assumed humanity. These were the same spirits, or evil spirits of the same kind with those who assail us through our inherited evils and animate them into sin. And by reducing all of them to subjection and order, he redeemed us from the bondage which would have

made it impossible for us, in the exercise of our own freedom, to receive and profit by the saving influences by which He perpetually endeavors to lead us along that way of goodness.

It is to Good, in this pure and exalted sense, that the flesh of the Son of Man corresponds. He gives it to us eternally. It is of His infinite love, and a part of His infinite happiness, to give it to us always, and to lead us and help us always, to receive it and make it our own. And when we receive it and make it our own, we eat His flesh.

So too we then eat the bread He gives us; the bread of life. For bread is often used as a generic term for food; and as food nourishes our material body and is indispensable to its life, so it is this divine goodness, in us, which alone nourishes and strengthens and becomes every thing in us that is truly Life.

Divine Good, and Divine Wisdom, are in perfect Union, and in perfect Unity, in the Lord. But in us they are two, and they are two in the whole universe, which is His creation for us, and is adapted to us. To one or the other of them, every finite and created thing refers and corresponds: or to their union so far as this union is effected.

In a man, the body, as has been said, meaning the complex of the solids, in its general correspondence refers to Love or Good, and the blood to Wisdom, or Truth. Or the body to the affectional, and the blood to the intellectual.

Our salvation depends upon our resisting our evils, and by avoiding sin, and repenting of sin when committed, putting away from us our sinfulness. Because in that way, and in no other way, can that condition of mind and character grow up, in which we shall permanently love goodness more than evil, and truth more than falsity, and thus become capable of genuine and abiding happiness.

But our perversity and our natural proclivity to evil, is so complete, that we could not know it, if it were not revealed: nor can we know it unless we accept the revelation. We

could not know the distinction between good and evil, unless we were taught that it existed and what it was. And it is Truth which teaches this. It is Divine Truth which comes from God, that teaches us the true character of our evil acts and tendencies. It comes to show us what is evil, and how this evil opposes God, and how we may overcome this evil and put it away. It comes to us for this purpose, so accommodated to our nature and our needs, that it may effect this purpose, if we permit it to do so. And for this purpose it comes as the Word of God.

It may be said that it comes as His Word, in all the instruction or suggestion of truth given to men. But it comes most and most directly, in that Book, which alone among books, is the Word of God.

But our Lord also came to give this instruction; to make plainer and more effectual the instruction previously given. But more than this, He came as the embodiment of this Wisdom. He came, to live as a man among men, but to govern his whole life and every moment of it by this Wisdom. He came, to bring this Wisdom out in its fulness in a human life, and thus to make that life one with the divine life of Good. He came as the Word of God, to exhibit that Word, and to be that Word after the glorification was completed as wholly in the outermost of his externals as in His inmost Divinity. He was and is the Word of God.

The blood of the Son of Man refers and corresponds to and represents this Divine Wisdom.

We drink His blood, when we receive His divine Truth; receive it as His and not ours; learn from it what in us is evil; learn from it how to resist this evil and put it away. And then we receive it into the very structure of our own minds; we unite it with our affections; we receive, we assimilate and appropriate His Divine Wisdom. We drink the blood of the Son of God.

But we do this under the semblance and symbol of drink-

ing the wine of the Holy Supper, when we drink that wine in remembrance of Him.

Wine refers and corresponds to and represents spiritual truth. When we say this we state a fact, which could not be stated and illustrated in its hold upon all surrounding and related truth and science — even so imperfectly as we might hope to do it — without writing a volume. Something of this has been attempted, in the explanation of the first miracle which our Saviour wrought.

Let us now add only, that Wine is “the blood of the grape,” ripened by the sun, and then drawn off and permitted to pass, by its own inherent tendency, into this new condition. Then, used to a proper extent, in conjunction with food, and when the bodily organism is suited to it, it nourishes and animates the whole man. But if used in disproportion or to excess, or when the body is not suited to it, it produces intoxication, and disease, and may go on to death.

So it is with Spiritual Truth. For Spiritual Truth is founded on natural truth, exalted and transformed; and when rightfully regarded and used, and permitted to do its proper work, is as the wholesome and vivifying wine of the Soul.

But when it is received in and by the understanding only, it does little good. The more there is of it, and the more it is loved and sought and learned for the understanding only, the more it inspires of vagaries and fantastic illusions, and this may go on until the soul is sick, until we are dizzy with the intoxication of pride, until “we are drunken but not with wine,” or still farther until all true spiritual life dies out, and “the second death” has come.

The three first gospels narrate the circumstances of the Last Supper, and the command of the Lord respecting it.

But the Gospel of John substitutes for all this, a narrative which seems to be entirely different. And yet it is, in its essence and its Spirit, only a continuation and completion of the former narrative.

Our Lord began to wash the feet of His disciples. And when one of them expressed his surprise and reluctance, "Jesus answered him; if I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me." And afterwards He added, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."

Of conduct and language so apparently unmeaning as this, it is obvious that we can learn the purpose and the significance only by supposing a symbolic, or spiritual meaning; and we can learn this, only from the science of correspondence.

It must be noticed that these occurrences took place immediately *after* the Supper which is described in the other Gospels. "And Supper being ended, Jesus . . . riseth from the Supper." The reason of this is, that in this Gospel we have the effect and consummation of the observance of the Supper which is commanded in the others.

Our feet are in contact with the earth; by them we stand upon the earth; and by our feet we move along its ways, and go to the places of our duties.

The Lord gives to us an inmost of which we are wholly unconscious, and into which He may flow directly. He also gives to us an internal, into which he may flow through the angels, and teach us spiritual truth, and inspire in us spiritual affections. But he also gives us an external, into which spiritual truth and good may descend and stand and move upon the earth and among its uses. He gives us power to permit them so to descend, or to obstruct and prevent their descent, or pervert their character and influence. And in and by this external, the good and the truth which flow into the internal, may bring forth their fruits, and express themselves in life, and become a part of our own abiding life; nor can they become elements of our own personal life otherwise.

The feet correspond to and represent this external. If this

external be foul with impurity and sin we are foul "every whit." If it be clean; if all impurity and sin be purged away from our conduct or our external life, then are we "clean every whit," — provided, always provided, we have permitted Him to do this cleansing work.

A man may, from motives of pride, or self-interest, or any other motive excepting the desire to obey Him, avoid every taint of sin in his external life, — and only drive this taint within. And he may thus so root it there, that it will constitute his life, his abiding and eternal life.

Only when our outward life is not only clean, but clean because we have suffered Him to make us clean; only when we are clean because His kingdom has come within us and all that rebels against Him is cast out; and His power is within us and all of our power is subordinate to His, when His is the glory because we give to Him the whole glory of a work which from ourselves alone we could neither do nor begin nor desire to begin; only then are we "clean every whit."

And then we shall remember His words, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet."

We shall remember and obey these words; for it could not be otherwise. If we have been cleansed by Him, we have received from Him into our own hearts, His own love; and it is a love of purity, and of goodness, and of infinite goodness. We know the blessing this love imparts. We shall know that we can do nothing else for others of so much worth, as when we give them any assistance in thus becoming clean. We shall know that then we give them gifts of unimaginable and ever-growing value. And as, to give these gifts to us and to all, was the very end and aim in which His infinite love centred, so it will be our highest happiness to work with Him in giving them to others.

For then we have eaten His flesh and drank His blood. and they have entered into our own, and have become our

own ; our own flesh and our own blood ; ourselves, from inmost to outermost.

Far, very far is this perfect consummation from our reach — almost from our conception. But let us understand it as clearly as we can, and strive to approach it. We need do no more ; and if we do this we may hope for every thing.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE APOSTLES.

TWELVE men were selected from the earliest disciples, and "sent forth" by our Lord, to preach His Gospel. And from the Greek word "*apostello*," which means "to send forth" comes the name by which they are commonly known.

They are the same in number as the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; and this similarity in number is founded upon their general correspondence. The twelve tribes composed, as a whole, the Israelitish nation; therefore, as a whole, they correspond to and represent a church; and severally they represent and correspond to distinctive elements of a church in man, or of goodness and truth in him derived from the Lord, and known and acknowledged to be so derived. So the apostles represent and correspond as a whole to the Christian Church, and severally to the distinctive elements of human character which constitute a church in man; or which must be the means by which the church enters into a man; or again, those elements of character which being regenerated the whole man is regenerate; or again, those elements of character, of thought, belief and affection, which the Holy Spirit may use as its instruments, and send them forth into the mind, the heart and the life, to penetrate everywhere, and overcome all obstacles, and by their testimony instruct, and by their influence as divine instruments regenerate, the whole man.

Three of the apostles have a kind of headship; they are often mentioned together; they were selected to witness

together some of the most interesting events in our Lord's life. They are Peter, James, and John the brother of James. Of these Peter was called first; then James and John who are spoken of as "companions of Peter;" and at a later period, the others. Our Lord "took Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them." In Gethsemane "He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee" (James and John), and there they witnessed His awful sorrows. He "suffered no man to follow Him, save Peter and James and John the brother of James," when He entered into the house of the ruler of the synagogue to raise to life the daughter, lying dead there. They who are willing to believe that the words of Scripture have in them more than other words, should be willing to know what such facts as these, so distinctly and repeatedly stated, are intended to teach.

Swedenborg tells us, that these three apostles, or rather the things which these three correspond to, have indeed a headship in the work of regenerating man and building the church within him; that Peter corresponds to and represents Faith, James Charity in the mind and intention, or in the will, and John "his brother" Charity in act, or love in its use and in its life.

Of the external acts of James, who represents only an internal state of mind, not yet come forth into external activity and manifestation, we should not expect much to be said, and not much is said. Of John "his brother," who represents the same element of character when it is brought forth into the life, we should expect and we should find, more to be said. Of Peter, as the representative of Faith, we find more, for reasons which will be plain to us in proportion as we understand the need, the nature, the working and the power of Faith.

If in the facts related of John the Baptist, we have a history and presentation of Repentance as it is and works in

the human mind and character, in what is told of Peter we have a vivid exhibition of human Faith; of faith in its strength and in its weakness; in its hope and in its despair; in its failure and in its repentance. Ready to walk on the sea at his Master's bidding, but when the wind becomes boisterous, sinking beneath the waves, and then calling as with the voice of despair, "O Lord, save me." At one time declaring "Though I die with thee yet will I not deny thee," then, when the peril comes, seeking safety in "I know not the man," and then "remembering the word of the Lord," weeping bitterly. At one time declaring the central truth of all truth, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and at another bringing upon himself the rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Many of the apostles were fishermen; and the meaning of this circumstance is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the promise of our Lord to make them fishers of men. Of the symbolism of water and its inhabitants I have already spoken. The apostles were to be "fishers of men;" but the conditions of their success in this higher kind of fishing are clearly stated, first in the 5th chapter of Luke, and then in the 21st chapter of John.

1 And it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genuesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other

ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James and John the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him. — LUKE v. 1-11.

They had toiled all the night, — in darkness, — and had caught nothing. But our Lord came, and commanded them to launch out into the deep and let down their nets for a draught. Simon answered that they had toiled all the night and their toil was fruitless, “nevertheless *at Thy word*, I (Faith, believing and trusting the word) will let down the net;” and then they were astonished at the multitude of fishes which they caught. And when in after days, they launched out into that great deep, the world, what other explanation can be given of their marvellous success, excepting that now they were His servants, toiling “at His word,” and His power went with them.

But in the last chapter of John, another condition is added.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. — JOHN xxi. 3-6.

They said, as before, they had toiled through the night and caught nothing. But morning came, and our Lord came with

it; for it is His coming which brings morning to the spirit. They told Him as before, how ineffectual their labors through the darkness had been. And He then commanded them "to let down the net on the right side of the ship;" and as before, they obeyed Him, and caught multitudes.

This is the eternal law; they who would catch multitudes of men, as fishers in His service, must act from and appeal to love, good, and the affections of the soul; for truth alone can do nothing. Throughout the Scriptures "right" and "left" are related to each other as good and truth, or as things of the affections and things of the understanding. And wherever these words occur they have this representation and meaning. We have already referred to this in the chapter on the spiritual world. When the Son of Man separated between the sheep and the goats, he set on His right hand, them who had lived the life of charity, and on His left hand them who called themselves His servants; but who had never learned from Him, that He offers himself to become the object of love and kindness in all who need love and kindness; and therefore while these claimed to be of His flock, they had *truth only*, and neither loved nor did what the truth commanded. They could say, "Lord when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? And he answered, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and, beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.—MATT. xiv. 24–33.

We have here a vivid picture of Faith asserting itself, and venturing upon peril and temptation; but in the hour of danger and distress, failing; and then of the divine assistance, “stretching forth its hand” or imparting its own strength, and the little faith becomes more, doubt is rebuked, and trouble ceases, and they who are thus saved worship their Saviour as the Son of God.

Fearful indeed, and beyond all mere human strength, may be the perils and temptations of those who listen to His call, and strive to walk through the strait and narrow path which leadeth unto life. Whatever Faith they have, it will always be true of them as it was of Him who represented Faith, that Satan, or evil and false influences, desire and endeavor to gain the mastery over them, “that he may sift them as wheat.”

31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.—LUKE xxii. 31, 32.

And it is of our Father’s wisdom and mercy, that these assaults are not prevented, but are made to sift away the chaff that the good wheat within their hearts may be gathered into His garner. And then they become His instruments, and “strengthen their brethren.” To them who have Faith,

and who know its work, its power and its blessedness, the command is given, which was thrice solemnly repeated by our Lord, as His last command to Peter, "Feed my sheep. Feed them with my truth."

But Faith, however earnest, even to enthusiasm, should yet be rational, cautious not to do harm by giving needless offence, and very careful to discover and discharge the whole duty which the highest spirituality always owes, to the external, practical, social and political relations of life. This lesson is taught not only by the texts in which our Lord instructs us to acknowledge the image and superscription of Cæsar (who stands as the impersonation and representative of all earthly power), in all those things upon which it is lawfully placed, and to render unto Cæsar the things which belong to him, but in the passage in which he commands Peter to take a fish (if what has been said repeatedly of water and of fish be remembered, it will be seen that "a fish" here represents natural and external truth, which commands and preserves natural and external order among men), and find in his mouth (or in the instruction of that truth) a piece of money, and give it to them whose duty it was to gather the public tribute.

No passages concerning Peter have exercised a more important influence, or contain a more important meaning, than those in which our Lord calls him a Rock, and declares that upon this rock, His church is founded.

The original name of Peter was Simon, which is a Hebrew (or Chaldaic) word, meaning "hearer." This was his name, because Faith must begin with hearing, and is a true Faith when it hears with the heart, with a love of the truth for the sake of the good which it teaches and leads to; and this love roots the truth in the heart, for then the truth becomes Faith, and a Rock.

He was also called Cephas; "And when Jesus beheld him, He said unto him, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou

shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone." Jona is a Hebrew name — the shortened form of Johanan — and means the "gift of God." And only as the gift of God can a true and living faith be received by man. Cephas means a stone, and is a Hebrew word signifying a stone or Rock; Peter being but the English form of the Greek word Petros, which has precisely the same meaning. This has passed into our language and we find it in such words as "petrified."

In the system of the universe all things of the outer home of man must correspond to the inner things either of the will, or of the understanding, for these together compose the whole of his mind. Solids in the complex correspond to things of the will, as liquids to things of the understanding; but again the same distinction runs through each of these great classes; and as some liquids, — as oil and milk, correspond to things of affection, so among solids, Rocks correspond to some things of the understanding; to truths crystallized, made firm and massive, fixed and established in the mind by the love of those truths, and thus fitted to be the abiding foundation-stones, or corner-stones, of whatever structure of belief may be built upon them.

13. When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

14. And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven.

and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. —
MATT. xvi. 13-19.

What is Peter, what is the Rock upon which the Lord has builded His church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Not Peter the man; that is impossible; not the personal successors of Peter whom the church when it had become Babylon (or corrupted by the selfish love of dominion), endeavored to maintain as the corner-stone of their own power; but Peter as Faith in the Truth he had just uttered.

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

And this truth is the foundation-stone, the corner-stone of Christ's church. While it was a living truth with the church, that church was immovable and impregnable. But the corruptions of human nature assailed this truth; devices and traditions of men robbed it of its simplicity and reality; and at last it is denied openly by a large portion of those who call themselves Christians, or made to bear a meaning which is worse than a denial.

So has it been with the church at large; so is it and must it be with the church in every individual man. Where that truth lives, where it is held in reverent and honest acceptance, there is the foundation of the church, and against the church that rests on this Rock, the gates of hell within the mind, all those falsities and fallacies through which influences of hell seek and find admittance, shall not prevail against it. The combat may be sore, and long, and carried on in great darkness. But if this truth is living there, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. “Blessed art thou Simon son of Jona;” blessed is the God-given faith in this truth; and upon it must descend the blessing of goodness and of peace.

“Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee;” for flesh and blood or the mere nature of man cannot reveal it; but they can do much, and they are sure to do all they can,

to prevent its acceptance, to hinder and cloud and distort this truth.

How hard it is to receive this truth in its own simplicity and its own fulness. It is not merely gross and vulgar infidelity which denies it; it is not merely a sensuous rationality which in its proud belief of its ability to comprehend all things denies whatever it cannot fully comprehend, and builds up with vast ingenuity and a poisonous plausibility its fabric of fallacy. There is also a naturalism which assumes a thick disguise and is unconscious of its disguise. There are those who are pure in life, benevolent in act, watchful in the discharge of duty and in all offices of love and kindness; and think themselves to be so good, they cannot believe that Christ was the Son of God, in any sense which makes Him more than they can be. They are satisfied with what they are or are becoming by their own efforts and their own strength; they can see no necessity for the stupendous miracle of God becoming man. They cannot see their own need of a Saviour; and therefore they cannot see their Saviour.

Most painful would it be, not to hope, not to believe, that holy influences are yet living and working within such minds, and will open their eyes hereafter, that they may see Him in heaven as the Son of God. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

And His Father is in the perpetual effort to reveal it, to all who are willing to see it; to all who are not unwilling or are unable, because their eyes are closed and sealed by that love of self, which is as inexhaustible in the variety and number of its forms as it is insidious in its approach and its influence. But "No man can come to me unless the Father draw him;" not unless the Divine Love, received into his own mind, draw him to seek and receive the Divine Wisdom; not unless a love of goodness draw him to the truth.

Our Lord also said to Peter in this connection, "I will

give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

On these has rested for many centuries the claim of the Roman Catholic Church to hold the souls of men in bondage. And how is this claim cast down, this fatal tyranny destroyed, when we know the true meaning of these words. For then we know that they have no reference whatever to persons or to personal office; neither to Peter nor to Peter's successors, nor to any priesthood of any church. For they mean that it is this Truth, that it is the faith we have in this truth, which is the key to heaven, and which binds and looses on earth and in heaven. For whenever this is held and in the degree in which it is held, — "The truth has made us free;" and wherever it is rejected and despised, or made of no effect by interpretations which take out its life, — we are bound by the powers of darkness.

When these three disciples are together; and together with Christ, or united and vivified by His Holy Spirit, if they go with him into the house and chamber of death, they see there resurrection; death becomes but a step in life and even the spiritually dead may be raised into spiritual life. "And he suffered no man to follow Him save Peter, and James and John," when he entered into the house of Jairus and restored his daughter to life.

And they in whose minds these three are united, are prepared to follow Christ up into a mountain apart; to ascend, led by His influence, into a state which is lifted far above the low levels of common life; and there they see the kingdom of God come with power. For He is transfigured before them, His face shines as the sun; and they see Him as the sun, the centre and the source of being to all that is. His raiment consists of the truths accommodated to our weakness and our necessities, with which he clothes His infinite wisdom;

and to those who ascend this "high mountain," led by him, and with these companions, these truths become white as light itself. This light shines out from His Word; and Moses and Elias, or the law and the prophets are with Him and testifying of Him. And then from the bright cloud that surrounds and overshadows them, or from the love and wisdom which they see filling the universe but always incomprehensible in its infinity by created intellect, — from this cloud a voice comes to them, the certainty comes to them, that He is the Son of God; the son, the embodiment, the fulness, of the Infinite Father.

And before the unspeakable glory of this Truth as they see it then, they faint, and fall on their face, and are sore afraid; for their own life seems to them as perishing, as nothing. But He comes and touches them, and bids them fear no more.*

The apostles came down from the mountain; and they who climb the sides of this mountain must soon return to the plane of common life and common duty, for there their work must be done.

Let me pause to say a word about mountains which are so often mentioned in the Scriptures. Their general symbolism is obvious. They rise above the common level of the earth; and they represent states of mind when that is lifted above the common level of the life. He who knows

* In the account of the Transfiguration in Luke ix. ver. 32, in our received English translation, there is a strange mistake. It is said "But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake they saw his glory;" leaving it to be supposed that during a part of this scene they were asleep. But there is not the slightest doubt that the Greek word means, not, "when they were awake," but "kept themselves awake." That the word has this meaning is certain not merely from its derivation, but from its use in this sense, elsewhere, as in Mark xiii. and other texts where it is translated "watch." The Latin Vulgate has "evigilassent."

nothing of this, has not yet learned that it is possible to stand for a moment on summits of thought or feeling which are too lofty to be our abiding home ;—has not found that even in this life there may be hours when a foretaste of a future elevation comes to console and to encourage. As often as mountains are mentioned in the word, they are so mentioned that they give to us lessons that may go down with refreshment into our common work, as the streams which run down the hillsides bear life and fertility to the plains at their feet.

The Law was given to the children of Israel from the summit of Sinai. There stood Jehovah, on a height inaccessible to human footsteps ; there in his own unbearable glory, and thunders and lightnings attested His presence. “And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking ; and when the people saw, they removed and stood afar off.” Only through Moses, who himself could approach Jehovah only by entering into a cloud and was then invisible to all below, only so did He speak to them.

But time passed ; rather, the fulness of time came ; and another law was given ; and this also was given from a mountain : “And seeing the multitudes He went up into a mountain.” But this time the Son of God stood upon a hill near Gennesaret ; a hill which travellers to this day speak of as combining in its attractive loveliness all the elements of beauty. There He stood, and gathered His hearers about Him. He climbed no higher than they could follow, and invited their approach. He spoke from above, to them below ; but He was not so far above that He could not be plainly seen and heard. And no thunder or lightning were there, to mingle their terrors with the gracious words of the Sermon on the Mount ; such words as “never man spake.”

And now another law is given. And this too is given from a mountain. But now, from a mountain only of the

spirit. It could be given us only through a mind lifted in affection and in thought, in love and in wisdom, far above the common level of these days. And it is given and can be given only to those who endeavor to approach this mountain by a corresponding elevation of character, or by an effort, at least, thus to place themselves where they can hear and learn, and receive into their minds these new gifts.

Whence these diversities in that which is, in its essence, one? Because, while in its essence it is one, in its forms it is many. For in its forms it is always limited and adapted, by perfect wisdom, to the times and their needs and possibilities.

The Law was given from Sinai to the most merely natural race of men that ever lived. That naturalness belongs to all and always will; but it is not in all men all that they have. To all men in all ages the Law of Sinai is to be a law, and the Law of God. But only to those who are wholly natural and nothing more, is it given *only* in its literal sense; and for them was this literal sense permitted and is now permitted to close around the spiritual sense in clouds so thick that no ray of the light within can pass through them.

To them He seems, because it is well that to them He should seem, a God of terror. From afar in His distant heaven he scatters his lightnings and speaks in thunder, and invests His Commandments with all the force they derive from threat and promise and the exhibition of absolute power. They can be made to obey, but in the spirit of obedience only; only from fear; and well is it for them, that even this may be the fear which is "the beginning of wisdom."

Then came our Lord. He bowed the heavens and came down, to change the waters of purification of the Jews into the wine of the Gospel; to elevate natural truth and law into spiritual truth and law. He came to give to men new truth; truth which could be given only to them to whom He could draw very near, and who could draw near to Him.

And now another law is given. If the first was a law of command and terror, and the second a law of instruction and truth, the third is a law of love. And as the law of command and terror proceeded from infinite love, and sought and seeks to do its work of mercy, by instruction adapted to them to whom it was and is given; and as the law of truth confirmed all the instruction given before while it disclosed new truth lying within "what was said of old time," like a soul within the body of the old, so the law now given, while it is only a law of love, is so because it shows that and how the former dispensations were but the work, the expression and the gift, of perfect love. It leaves the force of the first law not merely unimpaired but invigorated. It accepts all the instruction of the second, and makes it warm with the love and luminous with the wisdom from which it came.

Its truth is not, in one sense, now first given; for it came to earth before, clothed in those earlier revelations; clothed in garments which not only covered its body but veiled its face. For until now, "this veil has been spread over all nations." Now it is lifted. And this consummating disclosure tells us, in this first and feeble beginning, and will tell more plainly to future generations when our morning twilight shall grow into the fulness of day, that all its instruction is but a part of an infinite whole; of Divine Wisdom itself; which in all these ages has stood on earth in the Word of God.

The work which we have to do in common life is a long and painful conflict with the evil within and without us. Not an unintermitted conflict; for it is broken by intervals of victory and peace and joy. But it is long and painful, for our enemies are many and strong. And again these three apostles were called together, to witness an agony of conflict with evil, as far surpassing the endurance or the conception of any human nature but that within which was the fulness

of the Godhead, as the mountain summit of transfiguration is above all merely human experience.

They were called to witness the agony in Gethsemane.

These three apostles were witnessess of this agony. And when Faith, Charity in the mind and Charity in life are united, the eye of the spirit is opened to catch a dim and imperfect glimpse of the tremendous antagonism between evil and good; an antagonism known in its fulness only to the Sinless One, who for our sakes endured this agony, fought this battle between life and death, and won the victory. Known in its fulness only to Him; but known in a lesser measure to every man who walks a step forward in the path which the conflict and the victory of Christ have opened to each in his own measure and as he may bear it.

There is one other of the apostles, Thomas, to whom I would refer.

We know that Dan, among the tribes, had a home in the extreme northern boundary of the Holy Land; whence the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba." He may stand as the representative of the sensuous principle of the human mind.

When Jacob was about to die, he "called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." And of Dan he says, "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent in the path, an adder in the way, that biteth the heels of the horse, so that his rider shall fall backward."

This sensuous principle must indeed "judge *his* people;" but should "judge them as one of the tribes of Israel." In all things within its true scope and range it is a final judge, useful and indispensable when it keeps in its own place and does its proper work. If it be absent from the mind or silent, enthusiasm and fantasy prevail. But the senses should serve and not command the higher reason; the body should be the servant of the soul and not its master. In "the last

days" what is Dan? And first, what are the last days? They are those which come at the close of a dispensation or church; for every dispensation of religious truth is so far committed to the freedom of man, that it may be abused, falsified and perverted; and then it comes to an end and a new dispensation is given. We live in "the last days" of the first Christian Church; and one of the signs of it is, that Dan is now "a serpent in the way, an adder in the path." The serpent, among animals, corresponds to this sensuous principle; for he cannot leave the earth, nor stand upright upon it; but on it he is active, agile and strong; and his food is, not literally but spiritually, "the dust of the earth." And now this sensuous principle is a serpent and a venomous serpent in the paths of truth, or those paths the mind must tread, if it would go from knowledge to knowledge and advance in wisdom. The horse is the animal by which man is drawn or borne along the paths of the earth, and it represents throughout the Scriptures the faculty of the understanding by which the mind advances in intellectual paths. And now this serpent, this adder, "biteth the heels of the horse;" it poisons the understanding wherever it comes in contact with the earth, or contemplates external things and seeks to comprehend them. It so poisons the mind that the external rules the internal; the senses and sensuous thought govern the mind, and cloud or expel all belief in things higher than sense. What is the inevitable consequence? "The rider falleth backwards."

Thomas may be taken as the representative of this sensuous principle. In each of the first three Gospels, he is enumerated among the apostles and nothing more is said of him. In John more is said. When Lazarus was dead, "then said Thomas unto his fellow disciples, Let us go, that we may die with him." And so always says this sensuous principle. We may die with the dead; we can do no more; for in death is an end of all life and being. The thought

that Jesus might raise from the dead him whom he loved, did not occur to him.

Then, when Jesus, having risen from the grave, appeared to the disciples, "Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of his nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, *I will not believe.*" Thomas was not with them, for to this sensuous principle He cannot directly rise; it can know a truth like this only from higher principles; only when "the other disciples tell him *they* have seen the Lord;" and it is willing and able to trust to them. Thomas was not. Even if he himself *sees*, he will not believe, for he must *touch*. For sight corresponds to perceptions and touch to merely sensuous knowledge; and they in whom this sensuous principle is wilful and dominant can have no perceptions of higher truth.

Is he then left, abandoned to his unbelief? Infinite mercy comes to each one where he is, to help him if he can be helped. Our Lord came again to his disciples; and this time Thomas was with them. "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless but believing.

And then came the question of life or death. Can Thomas now believe? Will he say, "Yes it is you, but you have never died, and we were all mistaken there." For this is what this sensuous principle has made some to say of this appearance of our Lord in all ages. Or will he say, "I am dreaming; this is but a vision, a fantasy." For that is what this principle has made still more say in all ages. But Thomas made neither of these answers. He was now humbler than before, and more open to the reception of truth from above. And he said what no other of the disciples had said.

“Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.” Dan is one among the tribes, Thomas one among the apostles. Let the principle, the tendency, the characteristic they represent, keep its proper place and do its proper work, let it be open to the counsels of the higher reason, and evidence suited to its needs is abundantly provided; and when it is convinced its intensity of belief strengthens all the rest. It was not for Thomas only, but for all whom he represents, that our Lord vouchsafed this mercy. And who will say how many of like mind or like tendencies with Thomas, reading this record of his reception of this great Truth, reading it humbly and reverently, have been helped by it to believe even as he believed, to say what he said, to worship as he worshipped?

The late Dr. Arnold — one of the greatest and, so far as can be judged, one of the best men of modern times — preached often on these texts and clung to them. And as he was dying, with almost his last words, repeated them, with trust and gladness over which neither doubt nor death had any power.

Thorwaldsen, the eminent Danish sculptor, when he made for his native land statues of all the apostles, presented Thomas as bearing on his face an expression of thoughtfulness, almost of scepticism, and *having a rule in his hand*. And they in whom this principle is sovereign and self-relying, comprehend nothing and believe nothing which they cannot weigh with scales, or *measure with the rule in their hand*.

Let me venture to draw one more instruction from the representative character of the apostles. In the last chapter of John, it is said, “Peter seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John). “Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, what shall this man do?” or, more literally, “This man, what of him?” “Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry until I come, what is that to thee?”

This saying of our Lord has in all ages been the subject of much inquiry. The New Church can only recognize, with grateful joy, that infinite mercy whereby John has lived until He has come. For John represents and means "charity in life;" or the love of goodness in act and operation. And while the Faith of the Christian Church has been lost in the multitudinous falsities which have overwhelmed it, John, charity in life, still lives. Still lives and abounds; still lives and preserves in the church whatever life it has; still lives as the foundation of all the hope that it possesses. For in their hearts in which the love of a good life reigns, and so reigns that it commands the outer life into goodness, our Father will find the means and the possibility of establishing His kingdom upon the earth.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE SADDUCEES AND PHARISEES.

THESE were the two principal sects of the Jews. They divided between them the highest offices and leading positions in the nation, and were influential over public opinion. They are often spoken of in the Gospels; sometimes together and sometimes separately, but always with rebuke, and not unfrequently with extreme severity. While hostile to each other, they united in their hostility to our Lord. They co-operated in persecuting Him and in His death.

From the general nature of correspondence, we should expect to find these two sects representing the two principles or characteristics which are most opposed to a reception of Gospel truth; of all religious truth. And we should also expect to find in the specific statements about them, important instruction as to these two elements of human character.

The most general description of them would be, that Sadduceism represents unbelief; the rejection of all religious truth; mere naturalism. While Pharisaism represents external goodness with much profession of belief, hypocritical, and accompanied by pride in self and contempt of others.

A still simpler definition, using fewer words is, that Sadduceism rejects truth, and Pharisaism receives and perverts it. And as all Truth offered to us, if not rightly received, must either be rejected, or received and perverted, it follows that these two elements of character contain within them all opposition to religious truth.

And yet neither of them admits, neither of them believes this opposition. They both came to the baptism of John ; for they are both willing to come to any new thing and favor it, if it has drawn attention and they can hope that it will favor them, and give support and confirmation to their present condition and character.

But the baptism of John was unto repentance ; it meant repentance. "And when John saw them come to his baptism, He said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance." For the first emotion of true repentance convinceth one of sin ; and teaches him that he cannot flee from the wrath of condemnation but by bringing forth the genuine fruits of repentance. And John added, "Think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham for our father," for the repentance which he taught and signifies commands us to renounce all trust in the sufficiency and excellency of our own inherited nature.

But did they bring forth these fruits ? Did they accept the baptism of John ? "All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being *not baptized of him*." For repentance is the test ; the universal, the inevitable test. And the utter inability of Pharisaism even to comprehend repentance, is illustrated in the same chapter. Our Lord was in a Pharisee's house, when the woman, a sinner, a profoundly penitent sinner, came to Him bringing an alabaster box of ointment, "And stood at His feet behind Him, weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment."

And how was this repentant sinner received by the Pharisee ? "When the Pharisee saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if He were a prophet, would have known

who and what manner of woman this is that touches Him ; for she is a sinner."

Then, ever since, and in all the ages that are to come, this was and ever will be the answer of Pharisees — to a true, spiritual repentance ; to one which humbles itself as in dust and ashes, not before them, but before the Lord. And never has the mind in which Pharisaism prevails, felt, what so many humble and repenting sinners have felt, the infinite tenderness of the words with which our Lord and Saviour answered the Pharisee and forgave this sinner. To how many, through her, hath He uttered the words, "Go in Peace."

Sadduceeism is unbelief ; mere naturalism. And this may be illustrated by a comparison of two passages of Scripture. In Matthew xvi. 6, our Lord said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." But in Mark viii. 15, in the narrative of the same circumstances He said, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod." The Sadducees and Herod are thus used as convertible terms, of the same meaning. For Herod, the King of the Jews, impersonated the Jewish character ; and that was one of pure naturalism, or externalism. They believed in, lived in, cared for, external things alone ; and they who would go from externals to internals, from things of this world to things of the eternal world, go where such persons as these cannot go with them ; cannot understand them, cannot believe what they say, nor feel any interest in it.

If any who read this say, We at all events are free from this Sadduceeism, this naturalism, this externalism ; for we believe in and care for internal things, — will they permit me to suggest a question which they may ask themselves ; "What proportion does our thought of, our care for, our interest in, our enjoyment of, spiritual things, bear to our thought of, care for, interest in, and enjoyment of external

and worldly things." If this proportion be that which is due to their relative importance, and to the whole relation of externals to internals, then are they free from Sadduceeism ; then, only.

How general and how strong is this spirit of unbelief, in this age ! Very seldom is it now insolent and contemptuous in its denials ; and not unfrequently it uses soft words of qualification or disguise, sometimes winding up an enthusiastic glorification of nature with a few words about God, that it may not shock the lingering prejudices of the feeble. But where is not this Sadduceeism found ? Is not the prevailing science of the day, is not the teaching of the accepted leaders of thought, — not universally, but very generally, — Sadducean ?

In the Introduction to Neander's History of Christianity, he gives a picture of the condition of the civilized world at the coming of our Lord. Himself by birth and race a Jew, He could the better understand the character of his countrymen. As a scholar of vast and various learning, he knew all that ancient books could tell him of the Jews. And he brought to the investigation of their character, not only great intellectual ability, but an earnest and devout sense of the meaning and value of that Christianity to which they stood in perfect antagonism. He describes the Pharisees and the Sadducees fully ; and His description of that distant day may throw some light on the present. Of the Pharisees he says, "They stood at the head of legal Judaism." "To a rigid austerity in avoiding even the appearance of transgressing the ritual precepts, they united an easy sophistry, which sufficiently excused many a violation of the moral law." "One thing was wanting to them, — the humility with which those who feel the poverty of their own spirit go forth to meet the divine grace." Of the Sadducees he says, "Uprightness in the relations of civil society was every thing. Starting from this principle, there was nothing in their view of

morality which presented a point of contact for a feeling of *religious need*. Their way of thinking approximated to a Deism, which denied all revelation. They were for the most part persons of some wealth, who led an easy life, and satisfied with earthly enjoyments, closed their minds against all higher aspirations."

To return to our own times, what can be more opposed to the Sadduceeism of this age, than the Pharisaism of this age? Seemingly, they are precisely and uncompromisingly antagonistic, with no common ground to stand on. The one is stubborn, scornful, unbelief and denial; scornful, whether it hide its scorn or not. The other is confident, loud and self-asserting belief. So it was in our Saviour's day; and yet he joins them in one condemnation. In Matthew xvi. 1, they came together to ask of Him a sign. It was refused; and soon after our Lord warned His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees; and afterwards explaining to them what He meant, "Then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of *the doctrine* of the Pharisees and Sadducees." The doctrine, not the doctrines; for while they seem to be in perfect opposition to each other, and there is no one doctrine in which they seem to agree, all of their doctrines are one in their origin, and all are one in their result.

Pharisaism is indeed, under one aspect, the antagonist of Sadduceeism. It is, as I have said, belief, confident, emphatic belief. Probably there are none who look upon our modern Sadducees, our unbelieving Scientists, our Christians who deny Christ, with so much scorn as do our modern Pharisees. And there are none who despise our Pharisees as do our Sadducees, for what they consider the blind and irrational acceptance of traditional beliefs which the higher reason of to-day has exploded. And yet all belief which only nurtures self-love, and comes from and confirms a consciousness of superiority, and lives upon it, is, though it may put on different

forms, the same tendency to love self first, and trust in self, and rejoice in self-exaltation. The two combined together to persecute and to slay our Lord. The two combine together to resist and reject all genuine religious truth. For of such truth there is but one foundation; the denial of self, of the love of self and of the trust in self; and the postponement of self to God and the neighbor.

Sadduceeism and Pharisaism may easily meet in the same mind. An unbelieving Sadducee may be proud of his unbelief, for his unbelief is belief in himself, and he may feed his self-complacency with the thought how wise he is in seeing through the errors and follies from which weaker minds cannot escape. The only thing he does not doubt is the sufficiency of his own intelligence. And the more he denies of what others believe, the wiser he thinks himself, and the more contempt he feels for his foolish neighbors. In his belief, in his pride, and in his contempt he is a Pharisee. His contempt may be softened by pity, or disguised by policy or courtesy; but it is none the less contempt. And the Pharisee, while believing his own narrow religious tenets with undoubting faith, draws round them a sharp defining line; and whatever lies beyond that line, he holds in utter unbelief, in scorn and in hatred; he is as to them a Sadducee.

All religious truth requires, as its very essence, and as that which is indispensable to its reception in the mind and heart, a profound belief that religious truth comes from God to man, and so comes because man cannot have it otherwise.

Sadduceeism refuses to comply with this requirement, when in its trust in self it denies the necessity of revelation, and then the possibility of revelation. For this denial springs from a contentment with self, with one's own ability to discover all truth, and to do all good; to discover truth and to do good in one's own strength; and consequently to regard every step in the acquirement of truth or the practice of

good, as evidence of this sufficiency of self and a justification of pride in self.

Often, where this is not carried to an extreme so obvious as to bring it to one's own knowledge, it is still active, and wherever active it is mischievous. It brings a cloud over the mind. It suggests doubts and difficulties. It whispers "Beware how you receive that doctrine until you have compared it with all others; have tested it by your logic, and subjected it to your own ratiocination." It admits nothing. It forgets that all reasoning, on all subjects, must begin from some axioms of belief, which are held as true for no other reason than that they are seen to be true; and if our fundamental axioms of belief are only of sensuous and natural truth, reasoning from them can no more go higher than they, than the stream can go higher than its source; it can lead only to spiritual falsity, because religious truth and spiritual knowledge can be built up only on the foundations of axioms of belief of spiritual and religious truth, held to be true because they are seen to be true. It forgets, if it ever knew, that all religious faith must rest, finally, on the *perception* of religious truth.

The Sadduceeism of our Lord's time manifested itself most of all in "tempting Him," as it is called, by captious questions, skilfully prepared to catch Him and defeat Him. The Sadduceeism of to-day leads every mind in which it has any power, to tempt, to assail, His truth, in just the same way.

Pharisaism reaches the same end but by a very different path. It asserts that there is a revelation; and says, "It is for me; it is not offered to you whose eyes are blind and are groping in utter ignorance of that I know so well; it is not for you, but for me, and how wise and how good it has made me. I have nothing more to learn." The most common epithet applied to the Pharisees in the Gospels, is Hypocrites! And Pharisaism cannot but be hypocritical. It delights so much in its own wisdom and excellence, and founds upon them such a claim to the admiration of men and the admiration

of self, that it cannot help magnifying them, displaying them, and hiding whatever might derogate from their perfection.

When the Pharisee and the publican met in the temple, and the Pharisee thanked God "that he was not as this publican," he enumerated all the grounds of his superiority. He dwelt upon them proudly, because they gratified his pride. He asserted them all emphatically, that his claims might not be questioned; but of his shortcomings and of any thing which qualified his claims or made his excellence less perfect, he said nothing. Pharisaism is always hypocritical. While it is founded upon actual love of self, trust in self and admiration of self, it always claims from others even more, and generally much more, than with all its self-esteem it is able to believe in its self. With all its pride and self-reliance, it is always insincere and pretentious. It wears wide phylacteries to win honor among men; it seeks the uppermost rooms at feasts that its place among men may be recognized. It may even affect humility, to strengthen the foundations of its pride. And there is no pride more dangerous or more deadly, than pride in our humility. It fasts oft, and abstains from common enjoyments and recreations, to be seen of men. It gives tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and parades its gifts; but of its utter disregard of the weightier matters of the law, it is, in part unconscious and wholly silent. Moved by an impulse of good not entirely quenched, or by a desire to increase its merit that it may increase its pride, it may come to our Lord as Nicodemus came,—for "he was a man of the Pharisees, a ruler of the Jews;" but when it is told, that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," the *truth* about regeneration is to mere Pharisaism, inconceivable, impossible; and Pharisaism can make but one answer, the answer of Nicodemus; "How can these things be?" Modern Pharisaism asserts the doctrine of regeneration and its own regeneration. But the regeneration it seeks and is proud of is not the subdual of

self, and a new life from above; it does not seek to lose its own life for His sake, its cherished life of self-love, self-pride and self-contentment, that it may receive from Him a new life; one which in its humility acknowledges that all there is in it of good or of truth is the perpetual gift of Him who alone is Good and True in Himself, a life which is conscious that it is given to them who now are, and ever will be, and ever know themselves to be, of themselves, only foolish, weak and wicked. And when Pharisaism is told that a true regeneration does not begin until an effort is made to forget self, to humble self, to repent of the pride that was its life as of a deadly sin, and cannot go forward unless these efforts are continued and are successful, this cannot but seem as impossible as it would be "to enter into the mother's womb and be born again."

"Except your righteousness shall exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." And what is this Pharisaic righteousness, beyond which we must go, or not go upwards? It is something to be *exceeded*, not to be left undone; "for they sit in Moses's seat." We are told with entire distinctness what Pharisaic righteousness is. "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but within ye are full of extortion and excess. Blind Pharisee, cleanse *first* that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them *may be clean also*." For then only and so only will the outside be truly clean; washed clean with the waters of truth.

The verses just quoted are followed by these: "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Besides the hypocrisy which consists of conscious and intended falsi-

fication, there is yet the deeper hypocrisy to which these verses also refer. Pharisaism is none the better when its pride has wrought an utter self-delusion, and it believes itself as excellent as it would have men believe it. Its external goodness, whatever it may be, comes from motives which do not merely leave its internal uncleanness untouched, but intensify and confirm it. For all evil springs from the love of self, which leads to self-indulgence, whether it be the indulgence of sense or of self-admiration; and to disregard of the neighbor. And from the love of self and the evil it generates comes that trust in self, which worships self, and finds it so hard to worship God, or worships Him only that it may strengthen its right to self-admiration and to honor and authority among men. Nor can this deep-seated uncleanness be itself cleansed away, until there is a profound consciousness of it; a certainty that self has no power to cleanse self, a prayer for help from Him who alone can help. And if this help comes, as come it will if the way be opened by an earnest wish for it, — when it comes to a repentance which is not itself to be repented of, it will plant in the heart the deepest conviction, that we are withheld from wickedness and woe, that we are withheld from ourselves, only by Him, who cannot withhold us while trust in self and love of self resist and defeat His Providence.

Sadduceeism and Pharisaism, however hostile, agree perfectly in their devotion to externalism. Sadduceeism in its exclusive reception of external and natural truth. Pharisaism in looking at the outside of conduct first, and in its disposition “to bind heavy burdens and lay them on men’s shoulders.”

Very many of our Lord’s miracles of mercy were wrought on the Sabbath day; and this was a constant offence to the Pharisees, and they strove to use it as a means of lessening his influence. “And the Scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day; that they

might find an accusation against him." But when, in utter disregard of their hostility, he healed the withered arm, "They were filled with madness, and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus."

To tell Pharisaism that its abstinence from external disorder, when pride and self-love are nourished by it, only feeds an internal and malignant disease that eats life away, — cannot but fill it with madness; cannot but excite its utmost hostility against the truth which threatens with demolition its whole fabric of self-glory and of dominion over the minds of men.

When our Lord came on earth, He came at the close of a dispensation which, from the effects of human corruption, had lost its power for the good of mankind. He came to bring a new dispensation, to establish a New Church. He found the Pharisees and the Sadducees dividing between them nearly the whole belief and power of the nation. They were irreconcilable enemies to each other. But while they agreed in nothing else, they agreed and combined to oppose and persecute and crucify Him.

In all this we have a vivid picture of the present day. The Messiah was universally and anxiously expected by the Jews. But when He came, He was not such a Messiah as they expected or desired, and they rejected Him. Nothing is more noticeable at the present day than the very general expectation among thoughtful men who are interested in the religious condition of mankind, that light is about to break forth somewhere; that a revival of the church is needed and at hand, or, as some express it, that a new era is coming. This feeling is variously expressed; but we meet with it almost everywhere. In an interesting book I was looking at a few hours ago, — Whittier's prose writings, — I find this: "In the time, now, we trust, *near at hand*, when distracted and divided Christendom shall unite in a *new* evangelical union." Not long ago an able work by an author of some celebrity

was published in England, entitled "Saturday Night." And its purpose was to show that all the characteristics of the age indicated that we have reached a "Saturday night;" that this week of history has come to an end; that a "Lord's day," the beginning of a new week, was ready to dawn upon us. And in a lately published history of the Roman empire now commanding attention, there is an eloquent paragraph illustrating what the writer thinks the striking analogies between the condition of the world when our Lord came, and that in which we live. Even the Sadducees of this day rejoice in the hope that the reign of "Reason" (their Reason) has begun, and that before its growing light "Superstition," or belief in any thing which they do not believe, will flee away.

I might enlarge these references indefinitely. It is more to my purpose however, to say, that this new era, this beginning of a new week in history, this new "day of the Lord" has come; that this new light has broken forth. And why is it not cordially welcomed and generally received? Because most of those who expect this new light and perhaps anxiously await its coming, do in reality and in fact, expect and desire only *more* of that light which they now possess and which now makes them wise; only what will suit and confirm their present views, opinions and wishes. And when the light comes that tells them how unwise they are, it is to them, darkness. They expected a Messiah; but not a Messiah who will administer rebukes to them, as our Lord uttered His rebukes against those who expected Him. They cannot bear such a Messiah; such truth; and when He comes, they reject Him and it.

He has come, at the end of a church which has, from the effects of human corruption, lost its power for the good of mankind. He comes in the clouds of heaven; in the literal sense of that word which is the wisdom of heaven and the law of its life; in that literal sense which, drawn from earth and the things of earth, envelops the spiritual sense and has

veiled its glory and is now, by His coming in it, made translucent to that glory. He comes and finds Sadduceeism and Pharisaism dividing between them much, very much, of the thought and power of Christendom. Utterly hostile to each other, they are in perfect agreement in their hostility to Him.

He came before "to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel." He has come now to bring them into fuller, clearer light. And Sadduceeism "which says that there is no resurrection" again rejects His instruction. And the Sadduceeism which does not say there is *no* resurrection, but is unconscious how feeble and uncertain and undefined is its belief of another life, is shocked and startled at the strong light which now rests upon our homes beyond the grave. He comes to substitute the worship of God for the worship of self; to cast out the devils of self-love; to strike down pride and trust in self; to enable all who will, to see that self-love in itself, in all its forms, all its influences, and all its progeny, is but "a generation of vipers which cannot escape the damnation of hell." How can it be otherwise, than that the light He has given to make these things clear to them who will permit Him to open their eyes, must fill the Pharisaism of to-day with madness, and excite in it the fiercest hostility against this Truth, against this Light?

And as there were those in His earlier day, so there must be those in this His second coming, who, when their eyes are turned towards Him, towards His wisdom, towards His truth, and they are beginning to feel and to say that "never man spake like this man," are yet turned away, because "Then answer them the Pharisees Are ye also deceived? Have any of the RULERS or of the PHARISEES believed in Him;" the rulers of thought, the men who are accepted standards of religious faith? No, they have not believed in Him.

Let it not be forgotten that the elements of character I have endeavored to speak of, are universal. They have this prominence in the Gospels because they belong necessarily to unregenerate human nature. None are exempt from these tendencies to error and to sin. Who are they who never turn a deaf ear to truth when it is offered, and open the ear only to that which obscures and doubts and rejects the truth; who think their ignorance knowledge, and their unbelief wisdom, although they do not say so, and may not even know they think so? Who are they who are never proud of their belief, and bigoted in their dislike and disregard of those who differ from them, and arrogant in their assertion of their belief and their superiority over others? There are none such. None in, or out of, this New Church or any church; none of any name. None who need not constant, prayerful and humble self-watchfulness, that their own Sadduceism or Pharisaism do not reject the truth that is offered them, do not resist the influence that would save them, do not, so far as they are permitted to operate, crucify the Lord again.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CLOSING SCENES OF OUR LORD'S LIFE ON EARTH.

THE Gospels, while everywhere full of meaning and everywhere relating to events which cannot be compared with any other which have taken place on earth, deepen in their significance and their solemnity as they draw near their termination. And as we reach that termination and contemplate its awful circumstances, the sense of our inability to treat of them worthily, which has been oppressive through all our work, intensifies into a dread which imposes silence. And without attempting to consider them in detail, our remarks will be confined to the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and the death upon the cross, concerning which important errors have prevailed.

It seems to be generally believed that the sufferings of Jesus in the garden arose from His clear anticipation of the horrors of crucifixion; and that the deliverance for which He prayed was a deliverance from those horrors. It is strange that such an idea could ever be entertained. He was to suffer on the cross only what the malefactors crucified with Him were to suffer; and only what many of His disciples in succeeding ages were to suffer, often with constancy and calmness and sometimes with joy. Why should He have been so weak?

He prays "Take *this* cup from me;" not a cup which was to be held to His lips thereafter, but *this* cup, of which He was then drinking, and was soon to drain to the very last

drop. He prayed also that "the hour might pass from Him;" — not that a distant hour should not come to Him, but that the present hour, the hour of agony intolerable by any strength but His own, might then pass from Him. It was a present agony which wrung from Him His patient prayer.

What was this agony? His own words help us to answer; as it began, "when He was at the place, He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into *temptation*." And after "He rose up from prayer," He said unto His disciples, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into *temptation*;" and "again He went away, and prayed, and spake the same words."

The agony of our Lord in the garden was an agony of Temptation.

Temptation occurs when any thought of falsity or any evil affection is insinuated into the mind by evil spirits, and the influence of good spirits resists this evil through the reason, the conscience or the faith. Then there is a conflict in the soul.

Temptations are of every imaginable variety, for there is no impulse to think or believe any thing that is false, or to desire or do any thing that is wrong, which is not a temptation, and, if resisted, does not give rise to conflict. So too, temptations are of every conceivable degree of magnitude and force, from the slight disturbance which passes at once and is forgotten, to the agony in the garden.

No temptations can come to any human being, unless they are permitted by Divine Providence. And because that Providence is under the guidance of infinite love, none are ever permitted unless with the design that they should make the sufferer better, and therefore none which he may not resist and conquer. But the few of which this is true of any man, are vastly less in number and in power, than they would be if even a large part of his hereditary evils were let loose upon him. While these are not awakened by the

influence of evil spirits, they produce no effect, they do not come into consciousness, they remain only tendencies, they do not condemn the man; and if he take his place among the blessed, their activity is suppressed and their existence unknown. For infinite mercy provides that all of them shall remain thus suppressed and unknown, excepting those only, which becoming known, may be put away by resistance or repentance; and when put away may open an entrance and an abiding home for the opposite good.

Hence the worst temptations we know are but as the waters that lie on the surface and edges of the ocean, and are lashed by a storm-wind into fury. What would they be, if the whole ocean were moved from its very depths? If I say that all the temptations which any man has ever endured, are, in comparison with the temptations of our Lord, as the spray of the ocean compared with its whole mass and weight, I utter only a simple, but an inadequate truth. For our Lord came "in the fulness of time" or when time had done its full work, and all possible tendencies to evil were accumulated in humanity; and all were assumed by Him, all were brought forth and vivified in His mind, all were resisted, combated and overcome; and therefore no temptation can ever come to any man from any evil influence which was not felt by our Lord, and overcome by Him, and reduced and subjected forever to divine order, by our Lord's victory in His temptations.

We know what merely human temptations may do. Few of us can speak from experience of them to any great extent. But none can make much progress in spiritual improvement, without learning what enables them to understand the records of those men's lives, which show that these internal conflicts have caused intolerable anguish, and crushed strong intellects, and broken down bodily health. What were they when they were endured in their immeasurable intensity by our Lord's assumed humanity?

We may answer this question from the Gospels. They bowed Him down with a distress which expressed itself in sweat like great drops of blood. Where elsewhere have men looked upon or recorded an instance of mental suffering so intense and so proved? And the same work was the work of His whole earthly life; growing in severity as that life advanced; having its paroxysms of violence, alternating with periods of remission and calm; but always before Him. He spoke of His disciples as those who had been with Him in His temptations. And at another time He said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

And this work, and the agony which it caused, did not culminate in the garden of Gethsemane, unimaginable as it then was. It went still forward to its end upon the cross. In that end, He could no longer utter the prayer for deliverance coupled with submission to His Father's will; for even He knew the torture of despair; "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" More could not be. Immediately after, taking the narrative of Mark, "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost." As John narrates it, "He said, It is finished, and gave up the ghost." It was finished. The clay tenement which had held His soul, and had endured until the work should be finished, could bear no more and live no longer; the heart, which had already been so wrung as to pour forth its blood in sweat, now broke down in death.

Our Lord died on the cross, not because of the cross, but because of the internal suffering he endured while suspended there.

Death by crucifixion was not an uncommon punishment in ancient times. Instances are related of the crucifixion of thousands of prisoners and conquered rebels at the same time. Constantine prohibited this punishment in the fourth century; but it is now not disused in eastern nations. Much is well known about it. It was, and wherever practised is,

the most cruel, most painful, and most degrading form of capital punishment. The wounds would not cause death, or certainly not soon; the painful position would not be speedily fatal. It is commonly considered that starvation and thirst are the main causes of the death of one who is crucified. But their operation is hastened by the wounds and the pain, as sufferers usually die in from three days to seven. Their sufferings are sometimes shortened, either from mercy or other motives; and they are put to death by a sword-thrust or strangling, or, if it is not intended to show any mercy, by breaking the larger bones in succession until the shock terminates life. In this way the thieves were killed, because of the approaching Sabbath. "But when they came to Jesus they saw that he was dead already." He was crucified about the third hour and died about the ninth hour, so that he hung suspended on the cross only about six hours,—from about three hours before noon to three hours after,—the twelve hours of the day beginning with the Jews at sunrise and ending at sunset, the sixth hour being always at noon. This was far too brief a time for the physical suffering of crucifixion to destroy bodily life, and infidels have often asserted that our Lord had only fainted, and revived after removal; forgetting that a spear-thrust, which the flow of water mingled with blood proved to have pierced the pericardium, must inevitably have caused death. Yes, the period was too brief for death from the physical suffering endured. But within that period an internal conflict came to a consummation wholly unendurable by physical life, and unimaginable by human intellect.

Theologians and preachers constantly speak of "the sufferings of the cross." The phrase is inaccurate. If they said "the sufferings *on* the cross," their words would express a deeper truth than the human understanding has ever sounded or ever will.

Whoever "takes up his cross" to follow Him who died

upon the cross, tastes this woe. But the full cup was never presented but to Him by whom it was, and by whom alone it could have been, drank and drained, — drank and drained, for us; for you, for me, for every man that has lived or ever shall live.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN.

MY title-page indicates, what has probably been obvious to the reader of the preceding chapters, that the doctrine of the Divine Humanity of Jesus Christ is the centre and the sum of the whole doctrine of the New Church. In treating of every subject, and in the presentment of every truth, this has been assumed and understood. It has always been, in fact, referred to, although not always by name, or expressly. Sometimes it has been spoken of more distinctly. And now it will be attempted to exhibit this doctrine with as much clearness as is in my power, in this brief way.

Divinity and Humanity! What ideas are there within the scope of human thought more distinct and more different. They seem to stand at, or rather to constitute the very poles of thought. And they do so in fact; and therefore, if they can be brought together, if they can be made to approach until they reach each other and unite and become one, that one must cover the whole sphere of thought and of being.

What ideas are more distinct, and what are more opposite, in the common view? Nor is this view altogether erroneous. Opposite they are, and profoundly opposite, as they exist under some conditions, and are presented under some aspects. But, in reference to this very opposition, the doctrine of the New Church may be stated briefly in the following propositions:—

Divinity and Humanity, in their essence and origin One, have been made distinct, but not opposed, by Divine Love.

They have been brought into opposition to each other by that moral evil which comes from the abuse of human freedom.

All the influence of Divine Providence, in all worlds and all ages, and in reference to all persons, has ever had for its end the removal of this opposition.

This end Jesus Christ consummated.

By the work which He wrought, Divinity and Humanity, which were originally one in the Divine, were made to be again one in the Human. Thereby the Human was made Divine; thereby a goal or end was given towards which man may for ever advance. In the Lord, the Divine and Human were made one by a perfect and absolute union. This can take place in no man. But in man there may be—not a union, but a conjunction,—a co-operation in influence and in act and result. This conjunction begins at the first moment when any voluntary co-operation begins; and it may advance for ever with never-ending progress.

The truth, that the one end of the whole of the Divine Providence and action is to create a being who, while necessarily finite, because created, may yet approach God with an eternal and indefinite advance;—this truth is the key to all the questions which the Providence of God and the nature of man, and the relations of God to man, present.

The mere statement of these propositions will probably teach but little to any minds not already acquainted with these truths. They can be made intelligible to others only by some explanation; and this, so far as I am able, I will now endeavor to give.

I must begin with the idea of Divinity, and the idea of Humanity. Of these, the one is infinite and the other is finite. Any attempt to give any idea of divinity is, therefore, an attempt of a finite mind to form and to convey to finite minds an idea of the Infinite. And this may seem at once so utterly impossible that the attempt must appear to be unwise.

It may be, however, that further reflection will show us that the human mind has some power of approaching and contemplating the idea of the infinite; that it has in other directions and in other connections constantly exercised this power, and endeavored to approach and to make use of this idea; and that all its best progress has been founded upon the exercise of this power.

Let us look, for example, at mathematics. This rigorous science would, more than any other, disclaim and discountenance any attempt to form an *adequate* idea of the infinite; for the very meaning of the word makes it an obvious impossibility. And yet the higher mathematics assumes the idea of an infinite,—of the infinitely small and the infinitely large, of infinite increase and infinite decrease, and of the infinite continuance of ratios, in the whole of its work; and, indeed, works with this idea as its instrument in nearly all that it does. One name in frequent use still for a very important system of mathematical research is the calculus of infinites; and the results of this calculus are of the utmost practical importance, not only in astronomy, but in most of the branches of applied science.

Now, what is meant by this? Perhaps it is that all high and far-reaching inquiry finds itself recognizing an infinite, approaching an infinite, and measuring its own advance and success by this approach to an infinite; and must assume this infinite as the basis of its reasoning, and continue to assume it and make use of the assumption in all its action.

A very eminent philosopher states a proposition which seems to me to bear upon what has been said. He proposes that there should be a recognized science, which, as I understand him, should have for its especial object the investigation of the beginnings, the foundations, of all sciences. He founds this proposition upon the fact, that all sciences, as they are investigated upward, are seen to lead far away towards an infinite, or at least indefinite, unknown. He instances many

particular sciences as illustrative of this ; and remarks farther, that all these sciences, as they thus go forward, appear to converge. They thus suggest that this vast and distant unknown, as it would give the key to one of them, so it would to others, and may thus be regarded as the common fountain of all. I should express the conclusion to which his remarks lead my mind thus : that the Infinite, which must be One, contains all truth, and is the source of all truth, and that all forms or modes of science or knowledge radiate in various directions from this, like rays from a centre. It would then follow, that the more nearly we can approach this centre, or the more just is our idea of the infinite, the nearer we stand to the centre, and the more we possess of a light which may shine forth upon all the radii of thought.

All that has been said is true of religion, regarded as a science. Not more true of religion than of other sciences, but more prominently, more immediately true. Because as the essence, sum and substance of all religious truth, is the relation of God to man, we encounter the idea of the Infinite at once, and stand before it face to face.

What we have said on this subject leads to this simple conclusion. We can never attain to an adequate idea of the Infinite. But we may have *some* idea of it ; may use this imperfect idea safely and usefully ; and may advance, with never-ending progress, in the development and improvement of this idea.

Let us apply this principle to religious science.

Its first and fundamental instruction is, that there is a God, who created and governs the universe, and has laid certain commands upon men, and will reward their obedience and punish their disobedience.

There is nothing in all this which an immature or feeble intellect — the child or the simple man — may not clearly and usefully apprehend. But, can the human mind go farther ?

We all learn, as soon as we learn any thing, something

about what it is to love or not to love, to be wise or foolish, to have power and strength or to be weak. And any one inquiring what God is, may easily form the idea of one who has more and better love, and wisdom, and power, than we have, and than anybody we know possesses. And we may carry this idea forward to the belief that God has more of these than any man has, or can have; and even so far as to suppose that He has more of these than all men together have.

Here then, the foundation of all religious belief is laid. We hold a truth, which we never need to lose. A truth, which all conceivable or possible progress in religious knowledge will only confirm, and rest upon as its immovable foundation.

We have here then, an idea of the Infinite, which is very imperfect, but which is easily acquired and is just and accurate and safe and useful as far as it goes. But can we not go farther? Certainly we can. If we go *away* from this belief, we go into error; but holding it firmly, there is no limit, and through eternity there will be no limit, to our advancing knowledge of the nature and operation of the Infinite. And this is precisely the end which all the study of the science of Religion must ever have before it.

Not only is this true of the idea of God, or the Infinite, but it is equally true of each and every important religious doctrine. Coming from an infinite centre and wholeness of truth, it has within it an infinite. But coming down to man, it is assimilated and adapted to the human mind; and in its simplest form may be apprehended and used by all, and then studied to advantage and better and better comprehended by the strongest intellects, for ever.

The last perfection of human folly is the refusal to receive and apprehend the idea of God, or the infinite, or of religious doctrine, in its simple and accessible form or measure, because it is not possible, at once, to lay hold upon it in its elevation, and define the infinite.

And yet this is a very common error. It is the error of

all those persons, — numerous in all ages, very numerous in this, — who reject religious truth, and deny its reality, and assert its falsity, because it transcends the bounds of their understanding, or because, if they are thinking persons, they see that in its wholeness, it transcends the limits of all created and finited intellect.

To apply this principle honestly and fully to all the branches of knowledge and all the treasures of thought, would degrade the human intellect below the lowest point to which humanity has yet fallen.

If any one doubts this, let me ask of him, what idea he has above mere sensuous thought, *which he fully understands in its entirety, its beginning, its ending and its connections*. He who would not answer, I have no such thought, must have a feeble intellect, and an imperfect knowledge of the difference between understanding and not understanding.

And yet the simple avoidance of this error is all that we need to do in respect of the idea of the Divinity. Let us hold this idea in its simple and apprehensible form. Let us cling to it so. Let us call all that obscures or enfeebles this fundamental idea, falsity. And then let this idea grow, and shine with increasing radiance, as our religious knowledge advances and expands.

How full the Bible is of advice and encouragement to those who hold resolutely what truth they have, in the midst of the throes and struggle of thought, and the sense of utter darkness which mark the night of the conflicts by which we go slowly and step by step up the ascent towards light, the light of morning, of a morning without clouds. And how full of warning against the miserable folly, which casting away what we might securely hold, labors to construct for ourselves out of our fantasies, a home for our understanding.

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no

light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand. Ye shall lie down in sorrow."

OF THE HUMAN.

In passing from a consideration of the Divine to that of the Human, it may seem as if we pass from the infinite to the finite; and therefore from a topic concerning which we can form only the most elementary and imperfect notions, to one which lies in its length and breadth before us, and is everywhere accessible to thought. But it is not quite so.

There are some consequences following necessarily from the infinity of the divine nature, which affect importantly any conclusions we may form concerning the human nature. For if God be infinite, He must be in some sense, All. There can be nothing wholly outside of Him and independent of Him. For if where this was He was not, this would at once put a limit to Him. He then is not only Life, and not only has Life in and from Himself, but He *alone* has life of Himself. Nor can there be life, which in itself and in its origin is *other* than His life, or is Life independent of Him. But other things may have life if their life is derived from the divine life and only so; and therefore Life in all things that live, is His Life in its origin and theirs only by derivation from Him.

In Exodus iii. 14, "God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM; and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel; 'I AM' hath sent me unto you." And in Exodus vi. 3, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, God Almighty; but by this name JEHOVAH was I not known to them." The name Jehovah means, as nearly as we can express its meaning in English, "I am." The earliest revela-

tion of God to man, and the revelation of Himself which He makes to every man in the earliest stages of thought concerning Him, is as God Almighty; as a God of power, of all power, Almighty; it is a farther and a higher revelation that He is Being itself; and this is a truth which is ever ascending in the mind and ever widening in its consequences, as it is contemplated with intelligence and reverence.

Considerations of this kind lead us to a conclusion which is generally expressed by saying that God creates the universe from Himself. There are three ideas we can have concerning the created universe. One is, that it exists of itself, and in its totality is God, which is commonly called Pantheism. Another is, that God created it by the mere act of His will out of nothing. The third is, that He created it from Himself. This last idea is that which the New Church adopts.

It cannot accept Pantheism; it can only reject Pantheism with horror; for Pantheism is only Atheism under a disguise which is almost no disguise. Nor can it believe that the universe was created out of nothing. We can form no conception which these words would express; and therefore they present no object for belief. The ancient maxim, that from nothing only nothing can come, seems to be a law of thought, to which we cannot refuse obedience.

It is true that it is common to suppose God creating by willing; creating light by saying, "Be light." But if we analyze the thought which so expresses itself, we see that we think God is *there* where He creates. That He is there in His power, in His will, and all that constitutes His presence. It is not *nothing* which is there, but God who is there; and therefore the possibility of every thing.

And when He acts in such wise as to create, He creates from Himself. Because He is infinite, where He is not, is nowhere; and that in which He is not, is nothing. He is in every thing; and every thing which is, exists because

He is in it. And every thing is individually and specifically that thing which it is, because, being in it, He wills that it be that thing and not another. And this is creation.

This difficulty now presents itself. If we thus hold the universal presence of God, and also hold that every thing exists from Him and by virtue of His presence, do we not hold Pantheism? Our answer is, that the Pantheism we abhor is that which asserts not merely that God is *in* every thing, but that there is no God other than the mass or totality of all these things. When Pantheism says, God is *in* all these things, it does not say what it means; it would come nearer to an expression of its belief, if it said as it does sometimes say, that God *is* all these things, and that all these things constitute God. But what it means in fact is this; that if our habits of thought or speech require us to talk of God, we may if we like call the sum of natural things — substances and forces — by the name of God.

The New Church shuns and dreads this falsity just as every human being would dread annihilation. It holds, first, as the constant foundation of all belief, that God is; and that He is a most real and an infinite Person; and then, never permitting this primary belief to be lost or obscured or weakened, it holds that God creates all things, that He is in all things, that He creates them by being in them, and that He creates them from Himself.

Then comes another difficulty. If God creates all things from Himself, and is in all things, is not every thing God if He be indivisible, or a part of God if He be divisible. Or, if every thing which exists be created from the divine substance, and is infilled with the divine life, is not every thing Divine?

The answer of the New Church is, that every created thing comes from a divine origin, and in this sense may be said to be divine in its origin. But as it exists, and as it is Itself, no created thing is Divine.

The love of God causes Him to impart His own divine Life to man ; but so to impart it, that it becomes in man, man's own life. And as another necessary means or element of the highest happiness, while He gives to man His own divine life to become and be the man's human life, He gives with it, a perfect and constant consciousness and certainty on the part of man, that his life is his own life, and that he is Himself. For any approach whatever in any man to a doubt of his own identity is a beginning of insanity. This consciousness of identity is founded upon, or rather is one with, a consciousness that his life is his own, and that he is Himself.

Nor let it be supposed that this consciousness of man that his life is his own is a mere illusion ; a permitted illusion ; permitted that it may have its effect upon our conduct and character. So far from this, it is an inevitable consciousness of a most real, most certain, most absolute fact,—the most central fact of human nature.

There are yet other elements essential to the highest happiness and therefore belonging to human nature. One of these is Hope ; never-ending hope : and therefore never-ending progress. To make this possible, human life begins in the man himself at a point from which there may be progress and all progress ; and therefore at the lowest point ; at the point at which and from which every thing of true happiness must be accession, gain, progress. And then there must be a possibility that this progress may be unending, or eternal ; and a knowledge that it may be so ; and a hope that it will be so.

It is difficult to suppose that any one can believe that whatever power governs man, it has no intention or desire to make him ever any better or happier upon earth than he is now. Progress through the past is certain. It is difficult to see how any one can suppose that the end of this progress has been reached ; or that all has been done which could be done, and that man has become as good and as happy as it is possi-

ble for him to be. All men probably, all certainly who are not utterly desolate in thought, believe that in some way, and in some far distant age, society is to be improved, and men are to grow individually better and wiser and happier. But let us push our hopes or our imaginations in this direction as far as we may, the question will come before the mind, how is it to be with man after he ceases to live on earth; and we must come to one of three conclusions.

One is, that man is to cease to be when this life terminates, and that this being true reason shows this to be true, and shows it more clearly in proportion as it is enlightened. Then we must think that the wiser a man is and the better, and the more he therefore may and should enjoy and value life, the more clearly he will see that it is but a fleeting and momentary thing. And the wiser he is, the more certain he will be that the doom of extinction is always impending and must come after a few moments of life; and again, the wiser he is, the fewer these moments will seem to him; and if they are lengthened and he grows old, every step of his growing wisdom is a growing certainty that right before him and very near him, and constantly approaching him, is annihilation. But there can be no real happiness where this conviction prevails; and if it be seen more clearly or felt more strongly as man becomes wiser, then the advance of mankind in wisdom and intelligence is an advance in unhappiness. Can we believe this, if we believe that there is a God and that He is good?

But we may suppose another thing. It is, that while it is true that we perish when we die, this truth is hidden from us. We are mercifully deceived. In all manner of ways the vast majority of men are led to suppose that we shall or at least may live again; and in this way human hope and happiness are preserved. If we believe this, we must believe that God fills his rational creatures with falsehood. Only His rational creatures, for to the brutes He gives no capacity for either the

hope or the fear. But to His rational creatures He gives the utmost capacity for both ; and then encourages the hope and suppresses the fear by a tissue of falsehoods ; by enveloping the whole man, and penetrating all his thoughts and motives and affections and his whole life, and this more and more as the race advances and as the individual advances, — with absolute falsity ! Must not a rational mind turn away with disgust from such a theory ?

There is however a third conclusion. It is, that man may be encouraged to this hope and guarded from this fear, by the revelation to him of his immortality ; and that this revelation is not a falsehood.

Should it not be to any uncorrupted mind, strong evidence of immortality, that man can distinctly think of it, can firmly believe it, can hope for it ; or rather that he cannot but think of it, desire it, and hope for it. In the lower animals all faculties of mind or body are for a purpose ; all are founded on truth ; all constitute or indicate actual possibilities of enjoyment founded upon actual fact. Are we to believe, that with man alone, the highest of them all, God begins His work of deception. To him alone He gives a capacity of belief and hope which, when it is awakened into full vigor, becomes the centre of his whole life ; and this is from beginning to end a lie, and nothing but a lie. And certainly it is only a lie unless man be indeed as immortal as he is made to hope that he is.

Besides the gift of divine life to man, to become and to be the man's own life, and the consciousness of this ; and the possibility and the well-grounded hope of eternal progress, there are yet other elements of the highest human happiness. That which may be regarded as the most important of these, is the knowledge by man that his life is from God ; that his life is his own only because it is given to him by God to be his own ; and that it is and will be so given from God and

by Him always, perpetually, incessantly, eternally ; every capacity, every act or feeling or thought, being at every instant, the effect of life at that instant coming to him from God, either directly, or through appointed and adapted instruments.

This knowledge forms no part of human consciousness. It does not begin when consciousness begins. It is not in the mind of any man who does not learn it. They who begin to rise above a merely animal or merely natural condition, learn at first, only that they are dependent upon God. As they advance in knowledge and in wisdom, they learn that His love, His wisdom and His power, are constantly guiding and governing all things, and that every good thing they have — within them or without them — is His gift. But the consummation of this wisdom is in the certainty that life itself is not only His gift, but is the continual giving of His own life, flowing into man to become man's life.

The natural man, or the man as he is by birth into this world, at first knows only that he himself is, and that outside of him is a world which is not him. Then, if he thinks about his body and his soul, and about himself as living and the world about him as dead, he thinks that he lives because he lives, or from himself. This is a mere falsity. But it is an illusion permitted to the natural man, while he thinks only of natural things. As soon however as this falsity comes into spiritual things, as soon as it begins to affect his understanding of his existence and his relations as a spiritual being, it becomes a dangerous falsity. If it be confirmed in his mind, and if it gives character to all his thoughts about spiritual things, it becomes a destructive falsity. The merely natural man believes it ; and if he confirms this belief in himself, he condemns himself to be for ever a merely natural man. As the certainty that we live *from* God, and by the constant in-flowing of His own Life to be our life, is the consummation of wisdom, so the belief that our life is our own life inde-

pendently of Him, and that we live *from* ourselves, is the consummation of all falsehood.

All that has been thus far said of human nature — and much more — is included in the doctrine known among those who accept the teachings of Swedenborg, as the doctrine of PROPRIUM.

This Latin word is the neuter of *proprius*. It means (more emphatically than any other word in any language I am acquainted with), OWN, or that which is one's own. From it come our English words "property," and the like. All writers in Latin use freely the neuter of adjectives as substantives. We do this a little in English. Thus we say "a good;" and sometimes we say "a brave," "a white," "a black," and we speak of the "sweets" of peace or contentment. We say, however, not "a true," but "a truth;" not "a beautiful," but "a beauty," or "a beautiful thing;" not "a human," but "a human nature." But in Latin most adjectives may be used as substantives; and Swedenborg so uses many of them constantly. Thus, he uses "Proprium;" as when he says God gives His own life to man to be "proprium" to man. It would be an exact literal translation of this to say, to be "man's own." But he speaks so often, and they who speak or write of his doctrines are obliged to speak so frequently of that life which is a man's *own*, that we adopt the word Proprium, and speak of a man's proprium, or a human proprium, using this as an English word.

Nor let it be supposed that in the preceding remarks, or in any thing we can say, we attempt to give, or even to indicate, a complete explanation of this doctrine. The better it is understood, and the more it is considered, the more we shall see of the profound truths and the important conclusions which the doctrine reveals and explains. It is the central truth of the relation of God to man, and of the reciprocal relation of man to God: and, therefore, it is

central to all important truths and principles which illustrate the nature of God and the character and purpose of His work; or refer to the nature of man, to our possibilities and our perils, our hopes and our destinies. It tells us, as nothing else can, of the absolute antagonism to selfishness, of that infinite Love which gives its own life to become the life of beings whom it creates to receive it and hold it as their own, and infinitely desires and eternally works to make the gift and the free reception of it more and more full for ever. And it should tell us, as nothing else can, that the one great obstruction to the reception of divine life, without perversion, is selfishness, because this is the perfect opposite of the divine love.

Belonging to this doctrine are, especially, three great truths:— First, that God alone lives from Himself, or alone has Life in Himself, or alone is Life; Second, that this divine life becomes human life by continual inflowing into man; Third, that the divine life thus made human, and thus given to man, is given to be man's own life (or to be his *Proprium*) with the freedom which necessarily belongs to the *ownness* of life. In proportion as we get a clear comprehension of these truths, we shall have and be able to use a key to the great problems presented by human life in all its aspects; as, for example, freedom, what, and whence and why; responsibility and duty; the consequences of conduct; the methods and the ends of Divine Providence; the origin and the nature of evil.

The origin of evil! What topic has been the subject of more solicitous inquiry since men began to think? That its existence is to be accounted for by human freedom, and that it was even made inevitable by that freedom, has, perhaps, always been seen. For if St. Augustine was the first to give a logical exposition of this view, it had been distinctly intimated before his time. Here, then, there is nothing new in the philosophy of the New Church. The novelty consists

in founding this view of the *origin* of evil upon the *origin* of freedom; and in founding the freedom of man upon the nature of God, upon His infinite love, and the purposes which that Divine nature made necessary.

The great principles of the doctrine of Proprium, at least under one of its aspects, may also be considered in the following form.

God cannot cause created beings to live except by giving them life; and can give no life to created beings but His own, because there is no other; and therefore can cause them to live only by imparting His own life to them to become in them their life.

They must be *other* beings, or beings *other than God*, in order to become the objects of that infinite Love which must have such objects. It seems not difficult to perceive, that if the life of man were one with the life of God in unbroken continuity, there would be nothing within him to give to his life personal quality and consciousness as of his own life; nothing to *differentiate* (if I may use this scientific term) man from God; or to make him other than God. Therefore, this divine life becomes in man his own life; and man is *other* than God, because he is made to be HIMSELF.

But I must pause, and not even attempt to give, in this slight and imperfect sketch, my view of the philosophy of this important subject.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE DIVINE HUMAN.

THE purpose of this chapter is to lead towards a just idea — just, however dim — of the only Divine Humanity; that of Jesus Christ.

The first fact to be stated, is, that the Father, at the conception of the Virgin Mary, assumed a human form; a human character; a human proprium.

This human proprium was her proprium. It therefore contained as proclivities to evil and falsity, all that had come to her from her long line of ancestry, male or female.

The question we have to consider then is, In what way was this assumed humanity made divine?

Let us begin with considering another question; In what way is the human proprium of any man regenerated, and made to be good?

Every man's proprium contains proclivities to all the evil committed and all the falsity held by all his ancestry. Such (and only such) of those proclivities as he may be made able, in freedom and voluntarily, to resist and suppress, are permitted by Divine Providence to come into activity. Then the man knows them, may recognize them for what they are, resist and overcome them. If he can do this when they are only so far active as to be within his consciousness, it is better for him than if he waits until they come forth into act, into sin; but he may even then overcome them and put them away by repentance and reformation.

But the life of the man flows into him from the only

origin of life, in two ways. Direct and immediate influx from God causes him to be, to live, and for ever preserves his life. Then mediate influx reaches him through good or evil spirits. By this mediation or instrumentality, the inflowing life, as determined by them who are these mediums or instruments, is precisely adapted to him; is precisely that which is suited to his nature and may be most useful to him. And the character of it is at all times and in all respects determined by his own character (which by affinity determines his associates) with only such modifications as it is possible for Divine Providence to make — without suppressing his freedom — for the purpose of enabling and leading him to improve his character.

It follows therefore that whenever he resists and overcomes and puts away an evil, he resists and overcomes and drives far from him the evil spirits through whom this evil was animated.

And because all evil is perverted good, it follows also that when he resists and drives away evil spirits, he invites and receives the opposite good spirits; and receives from them, or rather from the Lord through them, the good that is opposite to that evil.

This is the way of regeneration. It is opened, by the Lord, because it leads man to his utmost possible happiness. It is the only way of regeneration. Only by sins and falsities is human nature made opposite to the divine nature; and when, and so far as, these sins and falsities are overcome and put away, is that opposition removed. And this is precisely the way in which the human nature assumed by the Lord was made divine.

In every man, those proclivities and only those which he can be enabled to resist and overcome in his own freedom are animated or become known to him. But the paternal life of Jesus Christ was not limited or qualified by its transmission through a human father. It was infinite; it had perfect wisdom and perfect power. It was therefore possible

for him to combat, resist and overcome all the proclivities to evil which were in His assumed human nature. Therefore He knew them all; and did combat victoriously with all, and did put them all away.

The incarnation of the Father did not take place until "the fulness of time." That is, until Mary had received in her own proprium, proclivities or tendencies to all possible evils and falsities: all, that is, generically, but not specifically; or all kinds of evil and falsity, though not all the particular forms of evil or the false.

It follows therefore that if all the proclivities to evil and the false in our Lord's assumed human were awakened and permitted to become active, all possible evils and falsities tempted him. Against all he fought. Over all he triumphed. Of this infinite warfare we can form only the faintest conception. But so far as we know what it is to be tempted, what it is to resist evil, and what it is to overcome when tempted, so far our conception of our Lord's temptation and warfare is just, however inadequate.

No man ever did, or ever will or can, thus know and thus resist and overcome more than a small part of the evil that is in him. But our Lord knew the whole, engaged in active combat with the whole, and conquered the whole.

The combat was in Him, as it must be in us, one of conflict alternating with victory; of the suffering and humiliation of conflict alternating with the triumphant sense of victory. He gave expression again and again to feelings proper to all these states. At times it seemed to Him that the Father was distant, and that He was left alone in His temptations. Feelings of this kind expressed themselves variously, in the different texts in which He speaks of the Father as other than Himself; and the last extreme found utterance in the words, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" At other times the father was very near; and then He could say such things as. "I and the Father are One." And at the

opposite extreme from the terrible despair upon the cross, stands the Transfiguration on the Mount. No man has ever known and no man can ever know either of these extremes as He knew them. But many men have known from their own religious experience the suffering that comes when their higher and their lower natures are in conflict, and the peace that comes when they are reconciled.

In so far as man puts an evil away, he receives into himself the opposite good; and when the good thus received prevails over the evil, the man becomes so far regenerate. He becomes *prevailingly*, but not universally, nor perfectly good. So much as this is now possible for every man, and it is all that is possible for any man.

But because our Lord resisted and put away from his assumed human, all evil, he received into his assumed human all good. And because he put away all evil, perfectly, the good that he received was perfect. It was wholly without stain, or qualification or limitation. That is, it was Infinite. That is, it was the whole of the good in its absolute perfection, that flows forth from the Father who alone is good, and who is only good. That is, it was Divine. Thus our Lord received into his assumed human, Divine good or Divine life; and thus that human became Divine, a Divine Humanity.

Whenever man resists an evil, he resists, and enters into combat with, the evil spirit through whom it reaches him; and if he overcomes in this combat, he overcomes this evil spirit. Because our Lord resisted all evil, he entered into combat with all the evil spirits in the kingdom of evil, and overcame them all. At this "fulness of time," all good had become perverted into evil. Therefore, resisting, overcoming and putting away all this evil, was putting away all evil; was putting away from humanity all evil and so permitting all good to flow into humanity; all good, infinite good, the whole divine good; and so, making humanity divine.

Moreover, falsity and sin had accumulated, or, in other words, evil spirits had multiplied and acquired power, until mankind were losing the power of resistance in freedom. There is no other salvation than salvation from sin. No man can ever be saved from his sins, excepting in and through his own freedom. This necessity arises from his nature. He is so made, and could not have been made otherwise by infinite love and wisdom, because there can be no personal individuality without self-determination; and if there be no personal individuality, there is no person to whom any thing can be given; there is nothing. The question never is, whether a man can be saved from his sins by an act of Omnipotence. If this were possible, none would be lost. But the question always is, can he be saved in his freedom. At the time of our Lord's coming, evil influences had grown so potent, they were suffocating this freedom; they were making it impossible that he should be saved, in the freedom without which it was not possible that he should be saved. Men were in danger of deadly assault from enemies against whom combat was every day more difficult. From this oppression, this peril, this captivity, this death, man was for ever REDEEMED. For the Lord, our Redeemer, brought the hells for ever into order, by a combat with them in human freedom; brought them into that kind of order suited to them, and to the use they can perform. He was a man. In His human freedom, He alone had power enough to overcome not only some, but all evil influences and all evil spirits. He had power enough to overcome all so perfectly and thoroughly, that all of them together should never have the power of destroying a man's freedom; although they might have the power of animating his evils so far as he could in freedom put them away; for it is well for man that these evils should be animated that they might be put away. The devils were not made angels, for there is but one way in which the evil can become good, and that way they had closed against themselves. The hells

were not destroyed, nor their inhabitants annihilated. But they were, once for all, reduced into their own order. Thenceforward it was still their life to love evil, to inspire evil; for their life was permanently a life of self-love — no other life being possible for them. But they and their influence are so controlled, that while they may bring to the knowledge of every man such of his evils as he may cast off, and while they may equilibrate the good influences of the heavens, in such wise that man may, in freedom, do his share of the work of regeneration, which can be done only in freedom, — neither all hell nor any devil can pass a hairbreadth beyond this line. Thus it may be said, that by the Glorification, or making divine, of the assumed human, even the hells were Redeemed, in so far as they were delivered from the unspeakably and unimaginably fearful consequences which must have ensued, had they been delivered up to the dominion of their own unbridled lusts, and to the unrestrained wickedness of each other. For their own good, as for the good of men on earth, has infinite love compelled them to become instruments of His love, and thus co-operate — although not willingly nor consciously — with angels whose life and joy it is to help man in the way to salvation.

Hereafter, for ever, no man can be tempted, and be willing to enter into combat with the evil, but the Lord stands by him, with even his Divine Wisdom, guided, as it is permitted us to feel, by his divine-human experience, and even his Divine Love, warmed by his divine-human sympathy, and ready to give to the suffering and imperilled combatant, if he will but receive it, the very strength which He Himself exerted, in combat against that very evil. For ever and for ever, in all man's direst needs, our Lord and Saviour is ready to come, seeks to come, in His Holy Spirit. A Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the New Church rejects absolutely and without qualification. But the Trinity of Love, Wisdom, and Power, it holds, as essential truth. It sees this trinity in the

divine life in man, made human life by being made man's own. It sees it in the love, which is the origin and source of every act ; in the thought which the love produces and by means of which love does its work ; in the action in which are the love and the thought that produce it. And when these three elements of the Divine are thought of severally, Infinite Love may be called the Father ; Infinite Wisdom the Son ; and in the whole action and operation of the divine power, this church recognizes the Holy Spirit.

The question may again occur, How can we believe that infinite power seeks its ends by circuitous and indirect means ? Is it not implied in the very word *infinite*, that divine power might accomplish all it would by merely willing its existence ? And if the whole end of divine providence may be summed in the desire to make men good that they may be happy, why not do this at once, for all, and perfectly ? But these questions can no more be asked as to this scheme — if so it be called — or this method of divine operation, than to any or every other which any system of religious truth, or religious falsehood, has ever supposed. Nor can it be necessary to make any other answer to an honest and thoughtful mind, than that, account for it as we may or leave it unexplained, all the kingdoms of created existence prove absolutely, that it is a universal law of divine providence, to accomplish its purposes through successive and gradually advancing steps, by means of instruments adjusted to various ends, and by a systematic method. To doubt this, would be to doubt whether divine providence has any thing to do with animal or vegetable existences, because all animals and vegetables begin with or are impregnated by certain means and in accordance with certain laws, and reach their maturity through growth by means of appropriate nutriment, and by gradual development, and with exposure to indefinitely varied hindrances and obstructions.

Infinite love, and wisdom and power! Let it never be forgotten, first, that we have or may have *some* idea of the infinite. This idea must be limited and conditioned, imperfect and utterly inadequate. This is made necessary by the fact that we are *not* infinite; that we, and all our faculties and qualities, are finited and conditioned. But we have an equal right to believe that while the purposes of our creation require that we should be thus finited, they do not require and they do forbid that we should be so far from the infinite, or finited in such way and measure, as to be wholly unconscious of our relations with the infinite. And if we are to have any consciousness of these relations we must be capable of *some* idea of the infinite; and this idea however imperfect and inadequate must be not wholly inaccurate, must be at least the beginning and germ of ideas of the infinite which will have in them elements of genuine truth; and these elements must have in them the possibility of indefinite development and growth.

While the causes, the principles and the methods of the divine action are as a whole and in their complex utterly beyond our reach, we need not therefore be wholly ignorant of them. For example, it may be suggested that one rational and probable cause of the universal law — that the divine power acts by means of instruments — is that thereby the universal Father gives to every thing He creates the good of being His instrument of use to every thing else; and thus He binds His universe together in the solidarity of mutual use and universal good. And the whole system of being, and all this active good, and all these uses converge towards the one highest possible happiness of man, ever enduring and ever enlarging in heaven.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

THE science and philosophy of this day are non-religious. Some who cultivate them have no religion, and a few avow this. Others have much; they are careful to assert, or indicate, that whatever their devotion to science, they have also a belief in religious truth; they declare, as they find opportunity, that the world is the work of an eternal creator, and they use the name of God often and not without reverence. But they separate their science and philosophy perfectly from religion.

An impression seems to prevail, that science must be injurious to religion. However certain and definite may be the fundamental principles of science, it must continually suggest questions which it cannot yet answer, for it is only so that it makes progress; and therefore doubt and uncertainty appear to belong necessarily to science, and will attach themselves to religious faith, if that be not preserved by separation and distance. So also there is a belief, that if science be not protected from the influence of religion, it must become unreal, enthusiastic and mystical. These impressions may be among the causes of that which can scarcely be doubted as a fact. It is, that science and philosophy on the one hand, and Faith, or religious belief on the other, are now not only disconnected, but severed, as if by an abyss.

But *if* there be a God; *if* He be the only Creator, and the

cause of all causation ; *if* we and all that we are and have and see, or ever shall be or ever shall see, are His work, and the effect of His causation operating by the laws of His order ; — if all this be so, it cannot be unreasonable to say, that any investigation into the nature, origin and relations of things and their laws, which ignores all this, must be importantly defective. And if it not only ignores all this, but excludes it ; and if this exclusion of all religion from science has become a very positive and constant element in all science, then, we may, not unreasonably, say, first. — that there is nothing in science which teaches or tends to teach religion ; or, in other words, there is nothing in the knowledge of the works of God as that knowledge is now cultivated, which teaches or tends to give any knowledge of God or of His relation to His works.

And, secondly, that if this knowledge thus excludes all religious knowledge, it cannot but be hostile to religion, indirectly if not directly, and all progress in it and all cultivation of it of the kind now prevailing, must bear the thoughts and belief of men away from religious belief.

And, thirdly, if a belief in God and in His constant presence and operation be a good thing for man, we might well expect that a new discovery of religious truth, or of a religion and a science which were not thus severed and opposed, might come from God.

And, lastly, if this did come, it must come by other means than any which a non-religious science could offer, or use, or accept, or recognize ; and therefore any exposition of this science or philosophy, so far as it is true, must, in that degree, be unfitted for acceptance by those minds which are influenced by the prevailing philosophy and science, so far as these are non-religious.

Science, philosophy and religion are distinct things, and should, in some sense, and for some purposes, be kept distinct in our minds. Between science in general, and philosophy in

general, the difference is easily seen ; but let them be wholly disconnected, and both are ruined. Whatever may be the extent or the accuracy of science in reference to especial facts, if it stand alone it has no other use than to fill the memory. As soon as the scientist begins to classify and co-ordinate his facts, to systematize his knowledge, to deduce or apply a theory, to discover rules and laws, he enters upon the domain of philosophy. Then, if his theory be sound, it will not only explain, connect and reconcile the facts he knows, and make them illustrate each other, but it will be a most potent instrument for extending his science by the discovery of new facts. And we may call this instrument a scientific philosophy, or a philosophical science as we prefer.

Very similar things may be said of the relation of religion to both philosophy and science. If religion be any thing, the facts upon which it rests must be the central facts of all creation, causation and existence. They must be the facts which science and philosophy cannot ignore, and still less deny, without destroying the only sure foundation of all science and all philosophy. If religion have any truth, then this truth must have an important relation to all truth. If religion be true, then whatever disregards it, and whatever denies it, must disregard and deny a part of the Truth ; and this part must be that which is the centre of all. It must, if religion be any thing, be that part, which should give system, order, completeness and certainty to the whole ; not at once, and at every step, but in its tendency and whole effect.

If religion be any thing, it must be the most important and *final* function of science and philosophy, to illustrate, develop, and confirm religious truth ; and science and philosophy which renounce this function must be lame and imperfect. And if they oppose religious truth, they must be false, and incapable of recognizing the truth.

If religion be more than an illusion, — in other words, if there be a God, — there must be a science of religion. This

science may be, and indeed must be, distinct from all other sciences; but not disconnected, and still less antagonistic. All science and all philosophy, must render their tributes to religion, and religious science be able to receive their tributes. This is meant in the Apocalypse where it is said of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, that "the kings of the earth shall bring their glory unto it;" for the city of God as a city of the human mind is a systematic and acknowledged doctrine, to which all the dominant truths in the mind bring their glory, — to confirm, to illustrate and to honor it.

If there be a God, He must be the primal and central Cause; that is, the cause of all Causation; and as all science, or all sciences, are founded upon an investigation of facts and the causes of facts and the relation of these causes to their effects, so all true sciences, more or less directly, and more or less obviously, must lead towards, or at all events, turn towards, the First Cause. And if they lead or turn away from this, they must, just so far, lead or turn towards falsehood. It should however, be the especial function of the science of religion to follow this investigation of causes up towards the beginning of causation, towards Him to whom we give the name of God.

But how can we, limited and cumbered as we are, understand any thing concerning God? One answer is, that in calling Him the First Cause, we have at least the means of learning so much as may be inferred from the essential and necessary relation of cause to effect.

The theory of causation is one of the most difficult topics which have come under human consideration. Writers of unquestionable eminence and power have come to the conclusion, that we know and can know nothing whatever of causation, but the immediate sequence in time of one thing after a certain other thing; and when we see this sequence occur constantly, we call the first term, a cause, and the second term, its effect. Touch a burning coal, and pain follows, and soon

a rapid destruction of the skin and flesh. We say the coal *causes* this pain, and this destruction; and we say so only because we have witnessed or heard of this sequence so often, that we think of it as constant and inevitable. Then, if we reason about it, we say we mean no more than this when we use the word cause. This is not quite true. It may be true, that we *know* no more than this; but it is not true that we *mean* no more than this.

For the idea of cause is inherent in the human mind, however it came there. It does not grow out of any observed sequences of facts; but it voluntarily attaches itself to those sequences. It is so ready, so eager to do this; and the desire to apply this idea and for that purpose to recognize the relation of cause and effect, is so natural to the human mind and so active, that we may make, and are constantly making, great mistakes in the application of this idea. It is not however a mistake to have, or to use, this idea. It belongs to the very constitution of the human mind. We cannot get rid of it if we would; and we should harm ourselves if we could; we should deprive ourselves of a powerful instrument, and a most important means of acquiring knowledge. But this instrument will be efficacious and useful in the degree in which we rightly apprehend what cause, or causation, is.

They who accept the philosophy of Swedenborg believe that he teaches much that may be very useful on this subject; so much, that it would be impossible here even to hint at the whole of it. There are, however, some principles which seem to underlie the whole, and may be stated.

One of these is, that God is not only the First Cause, but, strictly and accurately speaking, the only cause; because all other things which act as causes are only the media or instruments through which his causative, or producing or controlling force, acts. They may be called causes, but only because He, first, causes them, and then through them continues his work of causation, and so makes them to be causes.

Thus, in general, the spiritual world is, in relation to this world, a world of causes; and this world is, in relation to that world, only a world of effects.

But God, as Cause, reaches the spiritual world through media extending from Him in series, or degrees, in number numberless, and always as they rise above the spiritual world, more and more inapprehensible by human thought.

All of these media were caused or created by Him, from Himself, first, to be, themselves, and then to become the instruments by which his causative or creative power may go yet farther and lower and create, or cause to be, other and lower things.

Another thing which Swedenborg teaches on the subject of causation, or the relation of cause to effect, is this. Every cause is in some way *in* its effect; no cause can create out of nothing; no thing or being can communicate what it does not possess. This principle is by no means a new one. It was recognized as a fundamental and necessary truth long before it was expressed by the formula, "*Ex nihilo nihil fit*;" "*From nothing nothing is made.*" But this truth, however long or well known, and however certain it might seem, opposes perfectly the common idea of God and the divine power and act of creation. That idea is, that God speaks or wills a thing into being,—into being from nothing and where nothing was. Thus, the text, "*Be light, and light was,*" has been dwelt upon in all ages as a sublime expression of the divine power creating out of nothingness by the mere force and act of willing. But the philosophy of Swedenborg would understand this text as meaning, "*Let there come forth from God that which shall be Light; and it came forth and Light was.*"

Another truth taught by Swedenborg is also ancient, but heretofore not very clearly seen or stated, nor made much use of; although it is, in some degree, an inference from the principle last stated. It is this. The effect not only indicates, but

clothes, responds to, and represents the cause. Let us remember that all power, or energy, or force proceeds from its primal and central cause, and we may divide its methods of operation into two classes. By one, it operates from and through a higher plane of being, and creates a lower plane or degree of being. By the other, it operates among things on the same plane or degree of being. It may be an intelligible form of expressing these two ways of the divine operation, to say that in one way it operates from within, without; or from above, down; or through degrees of elevation or height. And in the other way it operates on the same plane through degrees of extent or width. And in both cases we may call the instruments through which this primal force acts secondary causes.

Thus, for the first mode of action, we may take the creation of this lower or material universe, from, through and by the spiritual universe. And we may either consider this as a whole, and then we say the whole material universe clothes a universe of spiritual causes, and corresponds to it and represents it; or we may apply the same to individual things, and consider only them, or only one thing, as an animal, a tree, a stone. For this truth is a truth as to the whole of these two worlds or modes of being, because it is true of every part.

But when we think of this primal force acting among things of the same plane, it is not quite the same. Here, *force* (becoming *forces* by flowing into and through individual things) either only imparts or propagates itself,—as when a stone thrown against another loses some of its motion, and gives what it loses to that which it strikes,—or else is converted into some other form of force, as when motion, interrupted by the roughnesses that cause friction, or the obstacles that arrest the motion, is converted into heat.

Let me refer again to one of the latest discoveries of

science, which is called the "conservation of forces," or sometimes "the correlation of forces," or sometimes "the identity of force." It has been found that motion, when arrested, becomes or produces heat; and heat, which, as has always been known, produces motion, is now known to become motion, and heat and motion are thus convertible into each other in exact and measurable proportions or ratios. So it is found that motion, heat, light, electrical and magnetic force, and actinic force, or, in other words, all known forces, are convertible into each other, or produce each other.

This, as has been said, is regarded as a recent discovery, nor is it now thoroughly investigated or well understood. Very much of what is now known on this subject, and truths and principles which underlie the whole, might have been learned from Swedenborg's philosophy more than a century ago. For from this it might have been learned, that God creates, animates, fills, sustains and controls the universe, by means of instruments emanating from Himself in series, or in degrees, one more internal within another more external, and that these instruments are as spheres or atmospheres about the Divine, the higher and inner perfectly inaccessible to sense or defining thought, the outer more and more gross until they reach our senses. And Force, His own divine Force, or Life, or Energy, working by means of modifications of these atmospheres, by these modifications becomes all forces and all activities. I use the word "modifications," because it better translates Swedenborg's word; but modern science uses, in respect to the modifications of the air and the ethers by which sound and heat and light are produced, the words "undulations" or "oscillations;" confessing, however, that neither phrase is precisely correct.

We have in this recent admission of a great truth an entrance by science upon a path which, it may be hoped, will lead it upwards to the recognition of the primal source of all

Force, the divine energy, always Itself wherever and however modified or manifested.

One great principle involved in all this is also not absolutely new, being, indeed, old enough to be forgotten; but we must look for its recent demonstration and development to Swedenborg. "The Divine is the same in all things, whether great or small, living or dead."

Force, or Energy, or Life, for we may call it either, and do call it by one or another of these names in one or another of its manifestations, is always One, always Itself, always what it was in itself and in its origin; and is determined as to its manifestation, its operation, and its aspect, *by the Form of that into which it flows and by which it acts*. Here we must be careful to discard the common notion that Form is the same thing with Shape. For shape is but the outside appearance of some things. All things do not have shape; but all things have Form, for all things have an inmost and essential constitution or manner of being, which causes and determines them to be what they are; and this is their Form.*

All things which exist are but forms or vessels receptive of influent life or being; and without this creative and sustaining influent life, they would not be. But this influent life is always effluent life also, because all things are created each for its own use in the universe, and each performs its use, because the influent life, modified by the recipient form, becomes effluent and performs that use.

* Bacon uses the words *form* (forma) and *law* (lex) as synonymous and interchangeable in some connections. Thus, in his seventeenth aphorism he says, "Eadem res est *forma* calidi vel *forma* luminis, et *lex* calidi aut *lex* luminis." I cannot understand the use which Bacon makes of the word *form*, otherwise than as meaning by it, *that* in any thing which makes it to be what it is, and determines all its functions and activities, and the whole of its "quale," — a word which our English word "quality" represents imperfectly. In this sense every entity must have a *form*, and that which is the *form* of any entity is its *law*.

Life is One, determined with infinite variety into all the forces, activities and effects in the universe by the inmost form of that into which it is influent, and from which it is effluent. This is an absolutely universal law, and the law of their existence for all things material, moral, intellectual, or spiritual.

Everywhere and in every thing in the universe which God creates and fills, we might find instances and illustrations of this law. One or two must now suffice. One shall be found in the parental love of God; for He is an Infinite consisting of distinct infinities co-existing in Unity, and it is the parental love in Him, which causes Him to be Our Father; to produce or create us, and to love us.

This parental love is *in* Him, establishing between himself and his creation, and all things of it, the relation of a Father to his children, but with a warmth and tenderness and wisdom of parental love infinitely beyond our capacity of comprehension. But it also flows from Him into His creation and all things of it, and is in every thing determined in its method of action, by the form of that thing. The same parental love which *in* Him causes Him to create and to love, flows from Him into the organic subjects of creation, and becomes in each of them the instrument of the Divine love in the work of creation and preservation.

A tree protects the infant buds to be born another year, with the wonderfully adapted covering of leaves folded together, those in the centre of the thinnest and softest tissue, then growing thicker and stronger, all inwrapping the central germ with a skill and accuracy human art could not imitate, and the whole enclosed in thick, leathery leaves, which are again varnished over with a lacker impenetrable to storm and winter, but yet so soft that the gentle breath of spring dissolves it, and as it opens the enclosing leaves unfold, and the germ comes out, to grow, and flower, and end with being the fruit,—the ripened child of the tree. What has

worked this constant miracle? The paternal love of God, entering into the tree, first forming it into adaptation to this end, and then through this form working out this end.

If we rise from the vegetable world to the animal, everywhere we find this parental love operating with boundless variety, from the animal most resembling man, to the insect which never knew its parent and prepares with exact sagacity a home for the children it can never know, on precisely that tree and no other, whose leaves will afford its children nourishment. And whether it be in the tigress, the sheep, the bird, or the insect, it is the divine parental love, determined by the form of that very animal, to do the very work best adapted to the preservation of the young of that animal, and so to the propagation and continuance of the race.

And if again we rise to man, we find now, conscious, rational paternal love, made so by the human form, which that love had so made that it might be capable of receiving and manifesting — and living out — this conscious rational love. And so the mother imitates the tree and wraps her babe in coverings that will keep out storm and winter; and father and mother continue through life, to exhibit towards their child, a faint, feeble, and most imperfect image of the infinite paternal love of God.

Perhaps another illustration may be given. Among the enjoyments of human beings is the sense and enjoyment of the beautiful. It is as yet but partially and poorly developed among men. But the whole earth overflows with beauty. It must be true, that myriads of spots which no human foot has trodden, are full of the beauty of landscape, of tree and flower, of lovely or splendid animal forms and color. Successive waves of this exuberant beauty have flowed over these unknown places in long succession for countless generations of vegetable and animal life. Why this creation of unseen beauty doomed to be unseen? Why this waste of that most precious thing, the beautiful? Why, — unless because the

possession of this capacity of enjoyment in men, proves that it must exist in God; and therefore permits us to believe that His eye sees it all, and finds in it food for one portion of His infinite happiness.

And so we might go on; but we could only end with saying, that all there is of will or affection in man is of the Divine Love which enters into man; and all there is of thought, understanding or reason in man, is of the Divine Wisdom which enters into man.

It is this Divine Love which becomes in man, self-love. And this is sinful so far as it turns away from the love of God and the love of the neighbor, but right and wise and good, when in freedom and by choice it is subordinated to the love of God and of the neighbor, and the care for self has for its end the better performance of use to the neighbor and the exercise and increase of the love to God. From this condition of the will and understanding there comes happiness, genuine and permanent happiness; the divine happiness itself in the measure in which men can receive it. And this condition of the will and understanding is possible, because the whole endeavor of infinite love, guided by infinite wisdom, and having the strength of infinite power, has for its constant end, the making of this condition possible for all, and actual for all who are or can be made willing, in freedom and in sincerity, to desire that it should become actual.

HUMAN FREEDOM AND HUMAN DUTY.

Not a word have I written to any good purpose, unless it has helped to make it clearer and more certain, that the end and the work of human life are, that the man, from being merely natural, may become spiritual; may become regenerate; may be born again. This is the end and the work of human life; the only end; the only good work; and excepting so far as this end is reached and this work performed, life is no other thing than a Failure.

For a condensed statement of the difference between what is natural and what is spiritual, we may say, that the natural man has only the thoughts, affections, beliefs, desires, motives and interests which belong to this world ; and that he cultivates only the faculties which he can use in acquiring a knowledge of the things — creatures, facts, or phenomena — of this world, and in understanding their relations and laws, and in making such use of them as he desires to make. A regenerate or spiritual man is one whose thoughts, affections, desires, beliefs, motives and interests, have, in a greater or less degree, gone up from this world to a higher ; or rather, still rest on this world, but regard it as an introduction to and a preparation for a higher. The faculties and the inclinations which he most values and most cultivates are higher than the natural ; higher than those which belong exclusively to the world and the body which are his by birth ; higher than the natural and therefore they are supernatural.

They who pursue employments and cultivate sciences, arts, and knowledges of all kinds, but with no reference to spiritual things, are natural men. They who have no interest but in spiritual things with no reference to natural things, are indeed spiritual men, but their spirituality is imperfect and unsafe, and easily runs into enthusiasm and fantasy. For spirituals are the souls of naturals, and the soul needs a body for the fulness of its own life and for its instrument. They who engage in and cultivate all natural things, but always with recognition of the spiritual relations which give them vitality and value and make them the means of eternal progress, they are truly spiritual men.

In the degree in which we comprehend this distinction, we may see, that while the possible progress of the natural man in goodness and intelligence may seem to be great, — may seem so to himself and to others, — it must be bounded by narrow limits in comparison with the possible progress in goodness and in wisdom of the spiritual or regenerate man.

The one is measured by this earth ; the other by the infinitude of heaven ; the one is to the other as time is to eternity, or as nothing is to every thing. We can in fact put no measure, no limit, to the possible progress of the regenerate man, — of the angel. And that angel who has ascended highest, sees from his elevation a yet more boundless progress in the infinite above him. He can never reach Him who is Infinite in Himself ; but he may for ever approach Him ; and our utmost faculties alike of reason and of imagination are lost in the effort to measure this approach.

If we are able to form any comprehension, however inadequate, of this indefinite possibility of progress and improvement, we may find in it a solution of a problem presented by Geology and the history of life upon this earth.

If my readers remember that I regard the external universe, in the whole, and in all its substances, forces, laws and history, as an expression and a mirror of the internal, they may not be surprised at the suggestion that even Geology — the science of the rocks — may have instruction for us bearing upon the topics above considered. This science is the youngest of all. Born almost within the memory of the living, it has made rapid advances and reached important conclusions, with various degrees of certainty. Perhaps its most certain — possibly its only certain — conclusions are, — that the earth existed countless ages ago ; that in its beginning it was without life ; that in ages unimaginably distant, life began in very low forms ; that the earth became gradually adapted to the needs of higher animals and higher animals came. In ensuing ages other and yet other animals, always advancing on the whole, in the kind and degree of life, successively appeared ; the great classes of animals coming each in the geological age suited to it and characterized by it. And, finally, in the latest geological age (if not in the present then in that next before the present), man appeared.

It is easy to draw from these facts the conclusion, that the

successive works of God advance in excellence ; and it is easy to believe that this is a law of the divine nature and action which cannot be arrested.

This view has led eminent writers, — especially that great and good man, Hugh Miller, — to suggest that man, in his turn, may disappear ; and that he may be replaced by some new creature, which in excellence and beauty of form, in faculty of every kind and all capacity of action and enjoyment, will be as much beyond men, as man is beyond the animals which he has succeeded.

This view has in it, I suppose, something of error and something of truth.

That man is to disappear and be replaced by a new and higher animal I do not believe. There is much which justifies the theory that man is the type towards which the progressive steps of creation have always tended ; that all animal life refers in its configuration and functions to him, every animal standing in its own definite relation to him ; and that the human animal is, merely as animal, not only higher than any which came before, but the consummation and completion of them all. They who believe the Bible must attach some force to the declaration that man is made in the image and likeness of God ; and these words would seem to be capable of no meaning reconcilable with the belief that there could be a more perfect form. And the whole system of doctrine of the New Church in its bearing upon the nature of man and his relation to God, and upon the human form as derived from the Divine, and as the expression and standard of orderly consociation, makes the idea of his giving way to a better kind of being, in this sense, impossible.

So much as this in the views above spoken of, I suppose to be wrong. But I have not the slightest doubt of the truth, the law, of constant and unending progress in the works and in the creatures of God ; no doubt whatever, that a new man is to be created ; that a new creature is to exist upon the

earth; and that in the ages to come there will be while the world lasts, an ever-growing improvement in the beings created by Life Itself, to receive that life and live thereby.

This new man is the completed spiritual man; this new creature is the spiritual man born of the natural man. In all ages, the man who was in some degree spiritual has lived among natural men, but unknown to them; so he lives now; and always he will be unknown to them, because a man who is wholly natural can have no comprehension of the beliefs, the affections, the hopes and the interests, which the man has who has begun to be spiritual, and is a spiritual man because he has them. In the ascending line of successive races of animals through an immeasurable past, often among the fossil witnesses of that past, individuals are found among races from which they differ by a difference which looks to a future; a few feeble vertebrates are seen long before the age of vertebrates; a few small mammals long before the age of mammals. As the geological ages roll on, these exceptions become more numerous and more complete until they become the rule and not the exception, and by their number and their strength characterize their age. So, a future lies before the hope of mankind, — a distant future, — in which natural men will cease to be as many as they now are, and spiritual men will be more in number and higher in character than they have ever been, and the age will be a spiritual age.

Infinite love could not be satisfied by any conceivable or possible progress in mere externals, in form or shape. or in the senses or physical capacities of a mortal being. Nor in any possible improvement of the intellect or the affections of an immortal being, while earthliness in the mind and in the heart set its insuperable limitation to all progress, and made it impossible for the immortal to make ready for immortality.

What then remained? To provide that from man the animal, from man the natural being, might come a higher man; that man himself might rise above the plane of animal life,

of merely natural human life, and become a new creature. By this, and by the possibilities open to the spiritual man, the necessity of eternal advancement in the works of God is perfectly satisfied.

The gradual ascent of the animals who have preceded man upon this earth may be considered as, in part, an increase of life, and, in part, as an advancement and elevation in the kind of life. One or the other or both of these elements of advancement mark the progress from mollusks to fish, to reptiles, to birds, to mammals, to men. Both are present, and in a far higher degree, in the birth of the spiritual man from the natural man. An indefinite and unlimited gain and increase in both of these elements (in the quantity of life and in the kind of life) will be seen, for the first time in the whole series of created things, in this new creature, the spiritual man.

To him is given all of the divine life which he can become willing to receive, and there is given him also an indefinite power of enlarging his own willingness and capacity of reception; and all the life he thus receives becomes HIS OWN. To him is given not only the highest forms and modes and measures of this infinite life which he can become willing to receive, but a gift as much greater than all the rest as eternity is more than time and heaven higher than earth, the gift of doing himself, consciously and rejoicingly, by help given to him to be his own that he may thus act, all that will open in himself a larger receptability of good; of good growing for ever in measure, and for ever rising in kind.

These are the gifts which the new man, this new creature, will receive; and, receiving, will make use of as his own. And what will they make him?

I suppose it would be impossible for us, in our present condition, to form an adequate conception of such a creature when he reaches the fulness of his stature. We could much more easily imagine a man, — or an animal replacing man, — with other limbs, swimming like the fish or flying like

the bird, with all physical powers greater, and all senses more exquisite. But imagine what we will in this way, the new creature of this sort is much less elevated above man and much less distinguished from man as he is, than the spiritual man when fully developed, will be distinguished from the merely natural man.

In many ages thoughtful men who have felt the strange sad contrast between man as he is and man as he might be, have imagined and portrayed a world as they would have it. But let the most brilliant and fertile imagination construct such a world, and if it be merely natural, composed only of natural men and exhibiting only such life as may come from merely natural beliefs and motives, — as were most of those Utopias, — what must it ever be?

The natural man must always find, in his own comfort and enjoyment, and in his own advantage, his primal moving impulse. He may be beneficent, and this in any degree, if in some form or other his efforts or his gifts return to him with usury, — with food for his pride, solace for his self-complacency, flattery of his excellence and worth, or with the honor and homage of men, and distinction, authority and power, or with repayment of any pleasure. He may indulge that natural kindness, or that impatience at the sight of suffering, which many men have. He may disguise his selfishness when he knows that its face is hideous; he may disguise it even from himself when its face is hideous even to himself, and that it may be disguised from himself and others, he may gild it with refinement and elegance. He may restrain his lusts when he knows, and as long as he remembers, that restraint pays him better than indulgence. And there may be a general and a careful respect for the order of society when their own experience, or the gathered experience of ages, teach men that every man's well-being is dependent upon that quiet enjoyment of himself and of his own, which only social order can preserve. But is not this all, necessarily all?

And can it be that selfishness and grossness and lust are to be effectually and always suppressed or hidden by a refined taste; always to be restrained by bonds so weak as these? That they will never break out and run riot if all that holds them is the voice of reason speaking coldly to fiery passion, speaking with the low tones of warning and admonition amid the roar and storm of lust and sin? Would not a condition, resting upon no other foundations than these, need, even more than now, its police, its prisons, and its scaffold?

Naturalism, at its very best, aims and can aim at nothing more than to give to selfishness all the benefit of culture, refinement, instruction and discipline,—and all for the purpose of increasing and securing its gratification. Hence at every step of the progress of naturalism towards the end it seeks, selfishness becomes stronger and more clearly defined and more distinctly acknowledged as the one motive power of all intelligent human action. The truth that is higher than naturalism, and which naturalism, which never looks up, cannot see, declares that selfishness is the source of all evil, while the love of God and of the neighbor are the source of all good and all wisdom. To the merely natural man such a principle is a mere inanity; he cannot but scorn it; and, therefore, it is impossible for him to see or to learn that his belief that naturalism is sufficient for the best happiness of mankind and for himself, is a perfect mistake. There may not be many who hold this belief consciously and systematically; but there seem to be multitudes,—far more than in any former age,—who hold it in a fragmentary way, floating, as it were, among their thoughts. They have no great liking or leisure for such topics of inquiry; but it may be all the belief they have, and may close their minds against the entrance of all spiritual truth, and all spiritual influence.

Let us contrast the best condition which the merely natural man can even think of, with that which would prevail

when all that is good in naturalism is filled with an infinitely higher good; when, to all the external motives of expediency, are added the higher motives which belong to the spiritual man. Then selfishness will not be disguised, but suppressed; or rather, self-love itself will be made a means of good, because the spiritual man loves his regenerated selfhood, and rejoices in his strength and in his deeds, *because* they are useful to others; because the stronger they are the more they make him to be and the more they prove him to be an instrument of God, and of that divine life which he knows that his own life is in its origin. Then lust and sin are rebuked by the presence in his thoughts of that God whose love and wisdom have forbidden them as our chief enemies. Then is benevolence made active, earnest, universal and wise, by the constant belief that it is in this that earth acknowledges the influence of heaven, and that by this earth may be builded into the likeness of heaven. And if we look only at the intellect, what must that gain when, in the investigation into causes and the laws of their operation, — which constitutes all science, — God, the First Cause, and the actuator of all causes, is no longer omitted and ignored. And when the human mind knows that it is permitted to enter, with awe and yet with gladness, upon the study of Him and His laws, and the working of that Life which is the universal life of all that lives. Then, too, the mind will not be regarded as a mere incident or function of the brain, but as a faculty of the soul, which is itself a reality of spiritual substance, preparing by all increase of goodness and of wisdom, through all the hours of time, for an eternity of conscious, personal life.

There are some texts of Scripture which it may be well to consider in this connection. Take this for an example, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. . . . And thou shalt love thy neigh-

bor as thyself." Can it be supposed that He who gave these two laws as the foundation of all law, and to whose wisdom all that lies in coming ages was present, would have so spoken were it not possible that even these laws might come into full effect? But who will venture to imagine what would be the condition of mankind when, prevailingly amongst men, the whole force of the will and the whole light of the intellect were fixed and concentrated upon love to our Father; and when turning from our Father to His children, we saw in all of them our brethren, and our love and our work for them and each of them were never tainted with any preference for ourselves; and an emotion which led to such preference would be felt to be too foolish, too wicked, and too painful to be tolerated. So far are we from such a condition that the attempt to conceive of it wearies the mind as with a painful effort. And yet we may carry this imagination so far as to see that if it could be realized among men, not only would the kingdom of God reign on earth, but men would have, in their degree and each one in his own, the very happiness of God.

Where, then, would be war and conflict? Where crime and punishment; where coercion and restraint? Where want, when every man was cared for by all men, and the productiveness of the soil, the enlargement of knowledge and its application to all useful or beautiful art, were continually urged on through the ages, by motives more powerful than those which now prompt every man to labor for himself with a devoted industry so wonderfully guided by Providence, that, on the whole, the selfishness of man is compelled to do, in a partial and imperfect way, the work of benevolence.

It might even be asked, Where then would be sickness? Let generations enough pass along to eradicate the seeds of disease now inherited by all, and let men aim habitually at the extirpation of the causes of disease whether moral or

physical, at the entire removal, both in himself and for all the rest, of all the habits and indulgences which generate disease, let all this be done energetically and systematically, because disease destroys or obstructs usefulness and lessens the sum of human happiness, — and I may indeed ask, where would be disease?

It must appear utterly useless to indulge imaginations like these, now; and to most readers they must seem mere fantasies. And yet one of two alternatives we must choose. We must say that a command to love the Lord our God with all the heart, the strength and the soul, is merely fantastic and unreal, or we must say that it expresses a law which reasonable men may seek to obey as far as they can, with a constant desire to make their obedience more and better; and that it may be hoped, that men, in some far distant age, will obey such a law in a degree far beyond any thing now seen; and that such laws therefore present a picture which their Almighty Author desires and intends shall become actual.

And then the direct and complete antagonism between this possible condition and the actual condition of men becomes obvious and certain. And the further we go in comprehending this antagonism, the more clearly we shall see that it is all summed up in the difference between the *natural* man and the *spiritual* man; between naturalism and a spiritual religion; between him who acknowledges and cultivates only that nature born with him and in its essence common to him and the animals, whatever may be the cultivation of which it is susceptible in man, a nature and a cultivation which would be the same if there were no other life than this; — and that spiritual nature, born of truth and faith and the knowledge of God and the desire to obey Him and to love Him; born in them who permit it to be born and who therefore become spiritual men; and never born in them who refuse to it leave to live.

And there are views of this matter which may bring to us

comfort and hope. We may see abundant indications that man, on the whole, has advanced towards the end which God desires. We may see reason to hope, that while these purposes of God are delivered over to the freedom and self-determination of man, because only through that freedom can they be accomplished, they are not relinquished, not forgotten of God. His infinite wisdom watches over them and is able to provide that even the freedom of man should become His instrument. He may well be patient who has Eternity for His time.

And then too the man who is weary with his burden and faint with the sense of his failure, may give somewhat of consolation to himself. When he imagines a completed regeneration, and compares it with his own condition, or with the best condition he can hope to attain in this life, he may well be faint. But he may remember that regeneration begins with the first genuine desire and effort to avoid an evil act *because it is a sin against God*; that it then begins a life which may never end; that with every such desire and effort it grows; and that, however imperfect it may be, if it be *alive* in his heart when he passes into the other world, there the Omnipotence which upholds his feeble and faltering footsteps, will lead him to a place among the angels, where he may go forward, ever forward, even as they go.

INDEX.

INDEX.

A.

AFFIRMATIVE, or negative state of mind, 47.
Angels, with them self-love exists but is subordinated to higher loves, 62. Life received by man from angels gives freedom, 116.
Apostles, chapter on the, 362. Three of them, Peter, James, and John, have a kind of headship; what it means, and what each of the three means, 362. Thomas, the incredulous; what the narrative concerning, means, 371-380. Fishers of men, and casting the net on the right side of the ship; what this means, 366. Peter representing Faith failing and strengthened, 367. Peter, why called a Rock, and what is meant by the Rock on which the Church is built, 368-371. Peter, James, and John ascending with Jesus the Mount of Transfiguration, 372. What is meant by our Lord's saying concerning John, "If I will that he tarry until I come," 381.
Archangels, highest, most constantly led by the Lord, 114.
Assyria, meaning of, 72.
Axioms, necessary foundations for all reasoning, 105.

B.

BAPTISM, the sacrament of, chapter on, 334.
Bible, recent attacks upon, 12.
 "Beginning of miracles" at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, 190-211.
Birds and insects, what they correspond to, 266.

C.

CANA OF GALILEE, miracle at the marriage in, 190-211.

Causation, God the First Cause, 428. Swedenborg's theory of, 428-433.
Causes and effects, series of, must be carried not backward but upwards, 105.
 "Choose ye this day whom you will serve," the command of every day, 90.
Christians, early; efforts of, to interpret Scripture by symbolism, 9.
Christianity, history of, 40. Capacity of development and adaptation, 41.
Founding and growth of, a miracle, 188.
Closing scenes in our Lord's life, chapter on the, 396.
Commandments, the, of infinite meaning, 21-23.
Conception, the miraculous, the greatest of miracles, 171, 185. Explanation of, given by the New Church, 172, 187.
Conscience, God leads man to Himself by, 110.
Conservation, and unity of force; what might have been learned about it from Swedenborg a century ago, 433.
Co-operation of the human with the divine, 403.
Correspondence, 1-35. Shown in language, 2.
Cowper, quotation from, 220.
Creation, work of, 15-17.

D.

DEMONIAC possessions, what they were, and how cured, 233-240.
Divine life, every element of, given to man, 109.
Divine power, comes from perfect union of Love and Wisdom; illustrated by comparison with human power, 126.
Divine and human, one in origin, how separated, and how united, 403.
Divine, the, and the human, chapter on, 402.
Divine human, chapter on the, 418.

DEUS HOMO; why I give this title to my book, see note fronting the first page, 1.
 Devil, not a person who is sovereign of hell, 98.
 Devil and Satan, what is meant by, 99.
 Devils know God only as their master, 118. Cast out of those whom they possessed, 233.

E.

EGYPT, Assyria and Judea; meaning of, 72. Woe and desolation of, 76-81. Blessings promised to, 82.
 Egypt, sojourn of our Lord in, 72. What is meant by going down into, 73.
 Eternity of Hell, 154.
 Evil, origin of, explained by origin of freedom, 417.
 Example of Jesus, how far can man follow it, 68.
 External world, common-sense belief of it just, 135. A reality, 137.

F.

FAITH, a reality, and the power of faith, 225-227.
 Form and Law, used as identical words by Lord Bacon, 434.
 Force, or power or faculty, in its origin supernatural and divine, 167. The recent doctrine of the conservation or unity of, 432.
 Foreknowledge of God, what, 90.
 Freedom, why given to man, 38, 60, 65. The gift of God from Himself, 89. Apparent absence of, in temptation, 92. Bad men do all they can to lessen their own, 93. Chapter on, 100. In the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, 101. In man, what, 102. As it grows happiness grows, 103. Human, the largest measure of divine freedom which can be given, 103. Infinite and eternal growth of, 104. In all creatures limited, 107. External or internal, 108. Small and feeble at its beginning, grows and strengthens by exercise, 109. Man never so free as when compelling himself to good, 118.

G.

GEOLOGY, what it teaches, 439.
 Gethsemane, the agony in the Garden, not an anticipation or fear, but a present agony, from temptations, 396-399. The agony in the Garden culminated on the cross, 399, 400.
 Give unto God, how we can do this, 255.
 Gnashing of teeth; what it means, 312.
 God, is Good and is Love, 64. His share in the work of our regeneration, 64. Why he does not destroy all evil by His

almighty power, 69. Leads man to Himself, by his conscience, 110.
 Gospels, surrendered to human freedom, 25, 26. Without them no Christianity, 26. How interpreted by Renan, and such as he, 27. Apparent disorder in, 35. Only invite acceptance, never compel it, 39.

H.

HEAVEN, nature of, 145. Happiness of, founded on love of usefulness, 163. Divided into three heavens, the heavenly, the spiritual and the natural, — defined, 147. Innumerable societies in, larger and less, how arranged, 148.
 Hell, Swedenborg asserts eternity of, but not an eternity of punishment, 155. None punished in the other world for sins committed here, 156. Is the reverse of heaven, 151. Fires of, what they are, 153.
 Herod, what is meant by, 74. First hearing, then imprisoning, and then slaying John; what this means, 345.
 Holy Ghost, sin against the, what it is, 229-231. What is meant by the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit, 424.
 Human, differentiated from the divine, by Proprium, 415.
 Human freedom and human duty, 437.

I.

IMAGINATION, its function and value, 4-6.
 Immortality, taught by the Gospels, 133. An argument for, 413.
 Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the greatest of miracles, 171.
 Indestructibility of all thought and affection, 83.
 Infinite, the idea of, in the natural sciences, 404. The idea of the science of religion, 405. The idea of, necessarily imperfect, but capable of eternal development and growth, 407.
 Inmost of our being, we are wholly unconscious of, 64.
 Internal and external, 58.
 Internal of man, if it prevails over the external, the man is saved, 59.
 Inspiration, what it is, 13-20.
 "It is written," the answer to every temptation, 99.

J.

JESUS CHRIST, birth of, 52. They who believe in Him receive Him, 54. Internal and external of, 57, 67. His life on earth exhibited externals of His internal works, 65. How the son of David, 66. His example, 67. Our Redeemer; how, 70. Childhood of, 75. Temptations of, 85-99. Tempted, as we are,

92. Did not *redeem* the devils, but relieved them, 94. The Devil taketh Him up on a high mountain, 95. The Devil setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, 98. His service not servitude but freedom, 120. Why he was baptized, 341. Of what, and how, he could repent, 341-343. Died *on* the Cross, not *of* the Cross; died from an agony of temptation, 399-401. By what means and in what way He made His human divine, 419-424.
 Jews, of the, 51. A chosen people, but not chosen for their excellence, 66.

L.

LAWs of nature, what they are, 169.
 Lazarus, Renan's explanation of it as the trick, 27. The resurrection of, 217-219.
 Led by love, difficulty of understanding, 113.
 Leprosy, that this disease corresponds to profanation, 229-232.
 Life, exists in the unimpregnated ovum, *potentially*, 16. In man, as Divine Life finited for man and in man, and given to man to be his own, 20. Attempts at defining, 106. Comes to us from those above and those below, 114. From below, seems to promise freedom to those who love it, 116. The eternal conflict of, 119. The infinite love of God shown in His giving His own life to man, to be man's own, 124. Divine, received without perversion, constitutes heaven, 145. That God alone is life, and has in Himself life, and that all life is His life imparted, 416

M.

MAN, never coerced into reception of truth, 13. Must co-operate with the work of God, 37. Internal and external of, 58. His share in the work of regeneration, 64. Condition of, at the coming of our Lord, 69. Is a person because he possesses the power of self-determination, 125. The greatest man, "Maximus Homo," 149.
 Mary, why selected to be the mother of our Lord, 66.
 Material body, *in itself*, always dead, but lives while a spiritual body animates it, 166.
 Matter, what it is, 135.
 Messiah, the, expected and desired, but rejected and crucified, 52. Expected by the Jews, and rejected by them, 134. Expected now as before; and having come is rejected as before, 393.
 Miracles, chapter on, 162. Of our Lord, acts of divine power working by un-

usual means and agency, 172. Cannot be believed by one whose natural faculties of thought only are exercised, 181. Use of this word in the Gospels, 182. Word so translated means only "sign," 184. Of cure, how wrought, 212-219. Lazarus, 217-219. In what sense the New Church does not rest on the evidence of, 221-223. The working of, on the Sabbath, 223. Cure of Peter's wife's mother, 227-229. Of casting out devils, 233. Of the devils who when cast out went into the swine, 233.
 Miraculous conception, cannot be denied and the Gospels received, 56.
 Mount of Transfiguration, 372.
 Mountains, their correspondence and signification, 373-376.
 Moses and the prophets, what they teach concerning life after death, 305-307.

N.

NATURAL truth and spiritual truth, 49. Natural faculties may be exclusively exercised, 165.
 Natural and supernatural, distinction between, 167. Common mistake about, 167.
 Naturalism, how it regards a miracle, 48.
 Nicodemus, conversation with, 249-253.
 New Church, reconciles reason and imagination, science and poetry, 10. Now descending from God, 29. Not sectarian; its truth wide as the universe, and wider, 41. Truth of, a reconciling truth, 42. Truth, its claims may by their magnitude repel belief, 43. Truth, evidence of, 44. Reception of, must be slow and gradual, 45.

O.

OUTERMOST, by this word is meant farthest from God, 63.
 Our Lord, his relation to the Bible, 29.

P.

PARABLES, chapter on, 241. That our Lord spake only in parables, 246. The cleansing of the temple by our Lord, 248. Conversation with Nicodemus, 249. The conversation with the woman of Samaria, 253-258. The sower who went out to sow, 258-269. The tares sown among the wheat, 262-264. The grain of mustard-seed, 264-267. The kingdom of heaven compared to a net, 267-269. That the new wine requires new bottles, 270-281. Of the man who had a hundred sheep and lost one, and the woman who had ten pieces of silver and lost one, 281-284. Of the laborers in

the vineyard, 285-286. The man who had two sons, 286. The marriage supper to which they who were bidden, would not come, 287. The importunate widow, 288. What entereth the man doth not defile, 289-292. The good Samaritan, 292-298. The rich man and Lazarus, 298-308. Of the ten virgins, 308-310. Of the five talents, 310. Of those who chose out the chief rooms, 312-314. Of the rich man whose ground brought forth plentifully, 314. Of the Pharisee and the Publican in the temple, 315. Of the rich young man who came to Jesus and went away sorrowful, 316-321. Of the wicked husbandmen, who slay our Lord that they may seize on his inheritance, 321-333.

Passover, the origin, practice, and meaning of, 347-351.

Personality of man, 88.

Peter's wife's mother, cure of, 227-229.

Pharisees (see Sadducees).

Poetry, whence it is, and what it effects, 3-8.

Power, the gift of God from Himself, 89.

Prayer, the Lord's, chapter on, 121. The Lord's, prominent in the New Church, 121. The Lord's, if we pray well, we must pray "after this manner," 122. The Lord's, analyzed, 122. Holds an important place in every system of religion, 123. Difficulty of understanding why we should pray to omniscient and infinite love, 123. Opens the doors and windows of the soul, 124. What it is, and what it does, 126. Difficulty about, only metaphysical and ratiocinative, 127. Common-sense conclusion about, just, 127. To God, illustrated by earnest request of a child to its father, 128. Of Solomon at dedication of the temple, 128. Of enthusiasts, 129. Only to those who ask can it be given, 130.

Profanation, what it is, 229-232.

Proprium, the use and meaning of the word explained, 415.

Purpose of this book, 29.

R.

REASON in Nature, 33.

Reconciliation of infinite love with human suffering, 112.

Redemption, what and how effected, 70, 422.

Regeneration, what and how effected, 250-253.

Relations of Swedenborg; abstract of, 159.

Remains, 83.

Riches, what is meant by trusting in, 319.

Robinson, John, of Leyden, his hope about the Word of God, 32.

S.

SACRAMENT, what it is, 334.

Sadducees and Pharisees, chapter concerning, 332. That the Sadducees represent unbelief, and the Pharisees represent belief with pride, self-trust, and bigotry; and that they are as prevalent now as at our Lord's first coming, and however hostile to each other, unite in resisting and rejecting Him, now, in His second coming, 332.

Satan, what is meant by, 99.

Science and philosophy of the present day irreligious, 425. Their most important and final function should be to confirm religious truth, 428.

Senses, spiritual, how opened, 19. Natural, what they in part disclose, 136.

Sickness, what it is, 213.

"Soul in Nature," Oersted's, 12.

Space and time, what they are, 139. Measure each other, 139.

Spiritism, or spiritualism, what it is and what it teaches, 301-305.

Spiritual organs within material organs, 18. Substance, what, 135. World, the, chapter on, 132. In the, things appear differently to different persons, 142. Divided into Heaven, Hell, and World of Spirits, 144.

Stones, the command that they should become bread, 94.

Supernatural, all faculty or force is, in its origin, and becomes natural when it comes down into and operates in nature, 167.

Supper, the Sacrament of, chapter on, 347. The holy, Flesh, Blood, Bread, Wine, Eating and Drinking, what they mean in reference to, 352-358. The washing of the disciples' feet, after the, 358-361.

Sun, instrument of the creation of planets, 142. In the spiritual world, "the First proceeding from the Lord," 143.

Swedenborg, not inspired; the general facts of his life, 134. His spiritual senses opened, 134.

Swine, the devils when cast out rushing into, what this means, 238-240.

T.

TEMPTATIONS, of our Lord, 85-99. Lasted during his whole life on earth, 95.

Temple, the cleansing of by our Lord, 248.

Time, measured in this world by revolution of the earth, 139. Measured in the spiritual world by succession of state, 140.

"Thou shalt not steal," 22.

Transfiguration, the, on the mountain, 372.

Transubstantiation, 352.

Trinity of divine persons utterly rejected by the New Church; but a Trinity of divine elements or attributes in the Lord, held, 423, 424.

Truth, do you love it? 49.

U.

UTOPIAS, constructed on the principles of naturalism and selfishness, 443.

W.

WATER, made wine in Cana of Galilee; that this miracle signifies the "water of purification" of the Jews converted by our Lord into the wine, or spiritual truth, of the Gospels; and the relation of the Jewish Church to the Christian, 191-211.

Woman of Samaria at the well of Jacob, 253-258.

Word, the, written by inspiration in accordance with correspondence, 18. The letter of, certain qualities of, 21. Translations and copies of, 24. Three ways of viewing, 31. Its spiritual sense continuous and perfect, 34. The word of a man, what it is, 53. The Word of God, what, 53. By His Word all things made, 53. The Word made flesh, 55.

World, external, created through internal world, 140. In this world persons of all kinds consociate; in the other associated only by affinity, 141. External, what it consists of, 137. External spiritual as real as external natural, 138. Natural and spiritual, differences between, 139.

World of Spirits, the, what is meant by this phrase, 151. Men are in it immediately after death, to prepare for heaven or hell, 157. The greater part of Swedenborg's relations of things seen and heard in the spiritual world refer to, 159.

THE END.

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